



Flag Removed from Obama's Jet

Alicia Herrington

Senator Barack Obama's jet returned from a month long refurbishment on Monday, without the American flag on the tail. Before being refurbished, Senator Obama's jet had a flag on the tail like most of the other U.S. airplanes. However when it was refurbished, the flag was replaced with the 'O' symbol that is Obama's trademark. The removal of the flag comes in the wake of the anti-patriotism charge against Obama, following the uncovering of his pastor's Anti-American sermons, and Senator Obama's refusal to where a flag pin, or place his hand over his heart while saying the pledge. SSI Students expressed differing opinions on the removal of the flag. Representative Shadae Simpson expressed shock at the move, crying out, "They can't do that!" Representative Jasmine Celestin disagreed, "It's for his campaign, it's fine." Whether you agree or disagree with the move, it's clear that the persuasions of this country are changing.



Abortion Clinic to Shut Its Doors

Alicia Herrington

A new South Dakota law came into effect on Monday that required South Dakota Abortionists to tell women that in having the abortion the procedure "will terminate the life of a whole, separate, unique, living human being."

This new law has accomplished what no other pro-life legislation has accomplished, the closing of a Planned Parenthood Clinic.

As the ruling went into effect, protesters gathered in front of the Sioux Falls Planned Parenthood Clinic, along with several women who apparently had appointments, all-in-all a normal day. But then something not so normal happened. No abortionists arrived for work, and the women eventually left after being counseled by the crowd.

Dr. Allan Unruh, who is an integral part of South Dakota's Vote Yes For Life said, "I think Planned Parenthood cannot figure out a way not to comply with the law."

The new law requires that abortionists to explain to women:

- The abortion will terminate the life of a whole, separate, unique, living human being;
- The pregnant woman has an existing relationship with that unborn human being and that the relationship enjoys protection under the United States Constitution and under the laws of South Dakota;
- That by having an abortion, her existing relationship and her existing constitutional rights with regards to that relationship will be terminated;

A description of all known medical risks of the procedure including depression and related psychological stress and increased risk of suicide.

The penalties for those who are found to be in violation of this law include stiff fines, loss of a medical license, and up to two years in jail.

Unruh is hopeful about the prospect of other states adopting similar measures. "Now is the time for Christians all across America to get involved in the voteyesforlife.com campaign. We must win this initiative that will once and for all outlaw all abortions for birth control reasons," he said.

Editorial

Bias in the Media

Alicia Herrington

The New York Times recently refused an opinion-ed piece by Senator John McCain. This would be fine, except that they accepted another opinion-ed piece by Senator Barack Obama, who is running against Senator McCain in the presidential race. This incident brings up the issue of Media Bias, there is no such thing as an unbiased media. And that's not necessarily a bad thing, after all everyone has some bias, formed from their experience and knowledge. Prejudice on the other hand, is a different matter all together. While bias is formed from knowledge, prejudice is formed from lack of knowledge. Prejudice in the media is often labeled bias, but it is prejudice all the same. It is the same hurting, biting monster, that has caused so much pain throughout the years, and it is something that we must all strive to avoid, whether in the media or in our everyday life.

Acing Your Interview with the Media

Brooke Rowland

The media is commonly feared because of it's uncanny ability to twist people's words and phrases, report news with unfair bias, and discover embarrassing quotes to print. This can all be extremely intimidating to students. But the most feared part of media involvement? The Wednesday press conference, which is mandatory for all Representatives.

Fortunately, most of this fear can be avoided, as long as you take one responsibility seriously: prepare. Don't prepare 'a little.' Be *completely* prepared. Know your bill and the arguments extremely well. And don't forget to turn on the charm and include reasonable amounts of self-assurance, affability, and intelligence.



First, try to make every person in your caucus focus on their own strong points. Find a driven, talented speaker from your caucus who knows the bill well and have them present your bill and answer most of the questions. Make sure your entire group is prepared, since the media can direct questions toward any member of the group, and we sometimes specifically ask a question of an unprepared-looking representative. (However, if a question is directed toward you that you cannot answer well, smile sweetly and say, "I'd like to defer your question to Representative [insert here]." Whew! The pressure's off). But whatever you do, never, *never*, say, "I don't know" or avoid the question in any way. We, the press, recognize that immediately unless you are a pro.

Remember, a picture is worth a thousand words. Or, in this case, just *looking* good can send a great message. Wear business clothes that are appropriate for the occasion to make the best impression. Sloppy, wrinkly, or overly informal clothing does not represent your group well. Your clothing should make you look focused and professional.

When you give the final speech giving an overview of your bill, make your goal be to bring out the emotional side of your audience and make them think your bill is a worthwhile cause. If you are being interviewed by mostly girls, bring out the emotional side of the bill. Regardless, focus strongly on the bonuses of your bill and tell the media why they matter. If there is a consequence of passing the bill, don't deny it, but prove why it is worth having a small side effect for the great rewards your bill will bring. On the other hand, if there are negative side effects that have not been addressed, there's no need to mention them. Your opposing caucus will definitely do enough of that for the both of you.

Finally, relax. Prepare carefully, calm down, and then do your best. You'll be fine. Remember, the people interviewing you were in your place just a few summers ago, so they can't know *that* much more than you do. Just be resourceful, look good, and finish strong – you'll glide right through!

Jumpstart your Caucus, Understand your Bill, & Rock the Capitol!

Brooke Rowland

You can do this! SSI can become a success—your favorite summer memory! Yes, there are things to learn, people to know, and projects to work on. You can tackle them all with a few tips to point you in the right direction.

Jumpstarting your caucus: Does your caucus lack energy? Is your SSI spirit running low? If so, your caucus could certainly use a little boost.

In order to get things going in the right direction, remember to keep a positive attitude. Your caucus has the potential to slam dunk your opponents, and you'll do better if you believe it! One thing you can do to start getting things done is to take control. Do your homework and come up with ideas about how to make your bill look the best it can. Remember, if you truly understand your bill it is a lot easier to get excited about it. One way to do this is to create your own simply worded summary of the bill. Then you and your group can see it plainly for what it is and will be able to spot problems and potential arguments with greater ease. Tada! Apply these tips for a fully energized, jumpstarted caucus!

Understanding your bill: "I've never seen that word before! What does this paragraph mean?!? Why do they have to make these things so difficult to understand?" Bills can be tricky to decode. You used to think reading *The Iliad* was hard now it seems like a breeze! How are you supposed to make sense of that crazy mess of hard words, weird sentence structure, and confusing ideas?

First of all, break it down. Go through your bill, paragraph by paragraph, and write a concise summary of the important things. This can take a little time, but it is well worth the work. Once you're finished, your bill will become a whole lot clearer. Hi-light important words or phrases in the bill itself. You might want to recite excerpts from it during your speech. This will also make it easier to glance over your bill and get the general idea when you need a refresher. Discuss the bill with your group. While you assumed one thing meant this, someone else in your group could think it meant that. Make sure you're all on the same page and then you can clearly communicate ideas and suggestions.

Now that you are prepared to tame your monstrous bill, transform it from a messy mix of confusing concepts into a neat, clear, and concise potential law. Don't give up! Do the work, put in the time, and clarify your bill.

Rocking the Capitol: Now that you've jumpstarted your caucus, understood your bill, and had a great time writing speeches, meeting friends, and studying all week, you're about to show how bright you can shine! Will your performance be a dud? Or will you rock the capitol? Hopefully, with a few pointers, the latter.

Pointer #1: Make sure your group has a pre-ordained amount of time for each speech that needs to happen at the capitol. This is crucial, since your group has a total time limit for all the speeches.

Pointer #2: Realize that in order to truly 'rock' the capitol, you're going to have to practice. After all, as the old saying goes, practice makes perfect. So, it stands to logic that, if you want to perform perfectly, you need practice. Once your knock-out speech has been written, practice saying it. At first, you can rehearse by yourself. Have a watch, clock, or some kind of timer with you. Say your speech at about the same pace you'd like to say it at the capitol building. Does your speech exceed the time limit? If so, look it over and cut out unnecessary details. What if there is still not enough time? Talk about this problem with your caucus. Let them look it over and either help you edit it or give you more time. Once your speech is well-practiced, perform in front of your caucus and ask for feedback. One way to make your speech better is to change awkwardly worded phrases. If you trip over a sentence when you practice, word it in a way that is easier to say. Also, typing your speech in large font can help you keep your place.

Pointer #3: On the day of the speech, relax. Tension will definitely not help your speech go well. Glance over your speech so it is fresh on your mind, but don't dedicate too much of your morning to practice, it will just make you more nervous. Once it's time to deliver the speech, talk in a loud-enough, professional, confident, and relaxed tone. Don't be afraid to look around at the people you are trying to influence with your speech. Whatever you do, do not only look at the speech the entire time. This makes you look nervous and unsure of yourself—not the impression you're going for! Besides, I know you can scrape up the courage to rock the senate, influence your peers, and make your caucus proud.

There you have it. Now, get out there to jumpstart, understand, and win your bill! You know how.

Sports Challenge

Philip Spitzer

Time came once again for the traditional Tuesday Sports Challenge yesterday afternoon. Due to lack of space and an invalid petition, once again Capture the Flag was not played as the SSI Sports Challenge. In its place where a combination of team sports: soccer, basketball, volleyball, and the bat game.



It was expected to be a great afternoon and it didn't disappoint.

Soccer is easy enough to understand kick the ball into the goal – simple right? Teams were running around crazily after a soccer ball which rarely made it into the goal, many times the players passed the ball to the wrong players, and of course the wild kicks brought the game to a halt until the ball was retrieved. Many players with talent managed to show off until they were swamped with people attempting to steal the ball. In short soccer was an organized chaos.



Volleyball is simple enough, run screaming "I got it" toward the ball and missing it completely. Of course you do have a few people who hit it right – and send it twenty feet out of bounds. Then you have the excellent servers who just hit ace after ace letting everyone else become complacent until someone actually returns the ball and everyone groggily attempts to save it.

Volleyball brought lively laughter to those who attempted to play.

Basketball was mainly dominated by those who knew how to play it and the one or two girls they had to pass the ball to. But most people expressed enthusiasm at being able to play and put most of their effort into playing and competitively tried to beat the other team.

The bat game was a new experience for the Representatives as it was their first time at SSI. A few derogatory comments were made: "I heard the bat game was stupid" and "the caucus meetings are more interesting." The game involved spinning around the bat and then carrying a leaking cup over your head to pour into a water bottle lying on another player's face. The game began to get out of hand when players began dump water on their fellow players instead of in the bottles. In the end the game was cut short when a few eager participants grabbed the bucket of water and deposed of it on other players.

Only a few people were pessimistic of the hour and a half game time and most people said that they enjoyed it immensely. Although a good majority of the participants would have liked to play capture the flag they did have fun anyway.

Birth: A Definition

Representative Daniel Sadasivan, of the Jefferson Blue Caucus

Bill SB 395 is known as the Legal Birth Definition Act. This bill was written in response to *Roe v. Wade*. *Roe v. Wade* ruled that only people who are born have the rights of human beings. This court ruling, however, did not specify whether or not babies who have partially left their mothers' wombs are born. This leaves in question the gruesome practice of partial birth abortion, whereby a baby's head is crushed or spinal cord sliced while he has partially left his mother's womb. The Legal Birth Definition Act declares that if any part of a baby leaves his mother's body then he is born according to the law. This means he has legal protection as a human being. This bill does *not* determine that a baby is not a human being until he is born. For better or for worse, that was decided by *Roe v. Wade* (a ruling which the Michigan House cannot strike down.) What this bill *does* determine is that if any person leaves his mother's womb, the law views him as being born and therefore this bill will protect him.

Dr. Lonnie Brown

Ricky Tanis

“You may be the last line of defense, our last hope.”



Tuesday, SSI had the privilege to hear Dr. Lonnie Brown, Pastor of Kingdom of Heaven Ministries and host of *Thy Kingdom Come*, speak to the student body on how God’s authority should feature in their lives. He told the students how every soul in creation must be subject to a higher authority, and if we don’t make God our highest authority, then we will make it something else. Laced through this speech, he quoted several Bible verses that showed how important it was to follow God’s authority, joked with the students; “Don’t yawn too big, it’s not going to get better” And even surprised the students by saying such things as; “I am pregnant” pausing to hear the stunned silence that followed before finishing with a big grin on his face; “I am pregnant with authority” He then showed the SSI community a motivating slideshow that showed “Gods correct order.” In this order, God’s Holy Mountain is the highest point of our lives and below Him are the hills, which represent things in our world such as finances, government, and the arts. These hills stream towards Him and reflect His will. However, in today’s society; “The Hills Have Taken Over!” God is pushed back and the hills have grown farther away from God’s plan with Abortion, “Civil Arrangements,” and the evil found in magazines and movies. Dr. Brown says that he feels that this falling away is why our society is having the problems it is having today. After this slideshow, he asked the group if they would like to pray with him and invited anyone who wished to come and stand at the front with him and pray. The entire group came up, and several people asked for special prayers for family members and other intentions. Then everyone sang an inspiring chorus of *Hallelujah* together that truly made everyone feel God’s presence. No one in that crowd will easily forget this speaker or his moving message.

Disturbing Similarities

Chelsea Convis

The Lansing State Journal (LSJ) staff gathered to discuss the next day’s news as the SSI Observer media carefully watched the events. What ensued was strikingly and disturbingly similar to how SSI is run as well. When asked what happens when the news staff disagrees, one woman said emphatically, “It is definitely *not* a democracy!” Another woman stated that if you want to change something: “You appeal to Mick [Hilton, editor], you make your case—” but, she added, the final decision is made by Mick.

Ultimately,” Hilton said, “I make the call.”

Disturbing. Consider: SSI is also not a democracy. There are repeated dark insinuations regarding a benevolent dictator. [The benevolent aspect is often called into question.] And if a student dislikes a part of SSI, he can appeal to this nameless dictator, make his case—but he has no part in the final decision. Where are the checks and balances necessary of every fair government? How are we to ensure that the students at SSI are treated fairly? Ultimately, this nameless dictator makes the call. And he holds the lives of hundreds of students in his hands.

Cup O’ Joe: Jumpstart Your Morning

Brooke Rowland

Tired, puffy eyes. Continual yawning. Rubbing eyes. Falling asleep while standing. Do any of these describe you in the morning? If so, caffeine could become your hero. One of the best, most effective sources of caffeine is coffee. It contains a generous supply of caffeine and is warm and calming. Not to mention that it comes with many delicious options of flavored cream. So, when you notice yourself starting to rub your eyes in the morning, treat yourself to a nice, hot, steaming cup o’ joe.



“Wait...but what if I don’t like coffee? It has a...well...*unique* flavor.” Don’t sweat it. There are many great ways to slowly get yourself used to the flavor of coffee.

One is the Café Mocha. That’s just a cool way of saying ½ coffee and ½ hot chocolate. Mix them

up and sip away! If ½ coffee is too strong for you, just add more hot chocolate. Each time you have a Café Mocha, put in a little less hot chocolate. Eventually you’ll be able to drink coffee by itself!

If you are almost-tolerant of coffee, then you can just water down the taste a bit. How? By adding milk or flavored cream. If you need to water it down a lot, stick to the milk and maybe some sugar (don’t add tons and tons of flavored cream—they’re dense and loaded with sugar!).

By week’s end, you could be a coffee chugging guy or gal. That means you’ll be energized, relaxed, and, of course, you’ll look super cool with a coffee cup in your hand. Seriously, who wants to mess with a caucus or business group who fuels their morning with a hard-core drink like coffee? I know *I* don’t!

Of course, if you really, *really*, hate coffee with a passion, there are other sources of caffeine. Mountain Dew as well as many other sodas contain caffeine, although they are much less cool looking than coffee. My suggestion to those who are completely caffeine tolerant? Carry around water in a foam cup—it gives you a busy professional look. Whenever to leave a group of people, hold up your nice foam cup as a way to say goodbye. It looks incredibly cool.



Heroic Rescue

Ricky Tanis

During a brisk game of volleyball during their free time, a wild hit by one of the players sent the volleyball far across the road and into a nearby drainpipe and disappeared from sight, bringing out strong emotions among the players. Nate Sisson cried out “My ball!” as he watched the white sphere vanish and was obviously troubled. All hope was lost and the players decided to switch to ultimate Frisbee, leaving the ball to its fate. However, upon hearing what had happened, two members of the media, Carman Idoni and Ricky Tanis decided to see if they could figure out any way to free the ball. After thinking up some unsuccessful plans, they finally came up with the plan to take a large rock and knock the ball out the other end of the pipe. After finding a suitable rock, they hurled it down the pipe. A large quantity of water cam out the end, but the volleyball remained stuck. Another attempt was made, and at the other end of the tunnel, a white light shone, or rather, a white ball. The two students removed the grate, retrieved the ball, replaced the grate, and gave the ball a good cleaning. The ball was then returned to its home in the SSI office, safe, sound, and clean.

Poll: Nightwatchman

Did the Night Watchman:

Cause you to lose sleep?

Give you great emotional distress?

Make you laugh?

What Night Watchman?

8% stated he caused them to lose sleep;

24% claimed he gave them great emotional distress;

24% said he made them laugh;

44% asked, What Night Watchman?

Watchman of the Night

Chelsea Convis

Three girls in a lower dorm room flip the light switch off and begin talking and giggling in the darkness—till suddenly the shadow of a *man* falls against their open window’s shades. And the screams break out.

Students have spent two nights so far at SSI, and both times the young women in the ladies’ dorms have been shaken by the sudden

appearance of a man casually strolling the grass outside their windows late into the night, occasionally flashing his light against the walls and windows.

Senator Caedy Convis said fearfully, “I was going to scream and run, because I was going to lift up the shades—but a man walked past. And,” she added matter-of-factly, “I decided not to [lift the shades].”

Representative Jasmine Celestin has seen him four times in two nights and asks: “Who the heck is *that* walking on our grass in front of the window?” Her roommate, Amber Taylor, agrees: “I was screaming.”

Representative Hannah DeRocher exclaimed, “[I’ve seen him] many times. He frightens me out of my wits!”

His existence, however, is not universally accepted. Not a few of the girls believe him to be idle gossip, created by the agitated imagination of over-excited females. Senator Rose Jagt declares: “He’s a rumor. I don’t like rumors.”

And—shockingly enough—some allege that he is not a legitimate Watchman at all, but one of the young men from the guys’ dorm posing as a Watchman in order to freely roam around the girls’ dorms without being in danger from the minefields. Senator Convis said in a hushed tone of voice, “He looks like Ben Idoni.” Senator DeRocher adds, “His identity is still unknown.”

Among those who accept his existence, the opinion is that he should either reveal himself or take care that he is not seen by the girls late at night, thus causing emotional trauma which may scar them for the rest of their life.

“I think,” said Senator Convis firmly, “he should be more undercover.”

Time alone will tell whether the Watchman of Darkness takes their advice.

When the Lights Go Out: Confessions of the SSI Men

Chelsea Convis.

11 p.m.: Lights Out. While a previous article depicted what occurs in the girls’ dorms in darkness, it left some wondering, what happens in the *guys’* dorms? What secrets of darkness and joy come to light then?

Representative Daniel Sadasivan said that, although ordinarily he would rather the curfew be later, in consideration of a 7 a.m. wake-up call an 11 p.m. curfew seems wise. Still, this didn’t keep him from playing chess with a roommate at night.

Leo Tanja and Vincent Malainy stayed up till 12am watching *The Matrix* on a cell phone. Both expressed disgust about the curfew and the strict reinforcing of it.

“It shouldn’t be enforced,” said Leo, who plans on watching *Spiderman 3* this week. Vincent agreed: “They [the ADCs] don’t let us talk [after lights out].”

That didn’t stop Joel Lerner from staying up till 11:45 debating about his bills with his roommates, playing devil’s advocate and pretending to be the other caucus.

Some students, difficult as it may seem to believe, observe the 11 p.m. curfew strictly—and *want* to. Philip Spitzer said that at 11 p.m., he sleeps—“Or,” he said darkly, “I *try* to.”

The curfew appears to be a more hotly debated subject among the guys of SSI than among the girls. While most girls interviewed agree that 11 p.m. is a good curfew time, many of the guys interviewed disagree.

“We should be in our *dorms* by 11 p.m.,” said Ricky Tanis, expressing a desire to be allowed out of the dorms past 10:30.

Carman Idoni, when asked if he approves of the 11 p.m. curfew, said, “11:30—that’s more reasonable.” How does he prefer to spend his time after lights out? “More debate, and comparing—” he paused, a mischievous smile on his face. “— nameless things.”

Advice for the Hero

Ricky Tanis

Everybody wants to be a hero. Just the word brings to mind those people who have no fear and stand up to evil wherever they see it. However, most heroes make at least one mistake that normally has some negative effect. Hopefully, this list will help prevent the heroes of tomorrow from making similar mistakes.

1. No matter how sincere he looks, do not shake the evil overlord’s hand.
2. When your powerful wizard friend fails to return at the appointed time, don’t wait until after your birthday to start your Perilous Journey, set out immediately.
3. There are three dimensions in space. You do not have to attack in the same plane as the opponent.
4. If you lose a hand and have it replaced with a prosthesis, the prosthesis should have a functional weapon built in to it. You can use it to surprise Bad Guys and open canned goods.
5. If your Mentor is slain in combat with the Evil Overlord or his henchmen, withdraw quietly, instead of shouting "Noooooo!" at the top of your lungs.
6. You should wear different outfits from day to day, so that the Evil Overlord's henchmen will not be able to spot you at a glance.
7. Begin your lifelong fight against crime immediately upon discovery of your powers, instead of withholding your assistance from the police, thereby allowing a minor criminal to escape and murder one of your loved ones.
8. Be courteous to all, whether friend, foe, or neutral. Especially neutral.
9. Being captured by the Evil Overlord is one way to learn his secret plans, but there are innumerable other ways that are better, and they will be tried first.
10. Always read the fine print.

A Poetic Quote

Lennie Mailand

This week
Whenever things aren’t going well...
[or you’re] having
a bad day
Just say
Mahalalel

Misquotes

Fun is not allowed. - Brooke Rowland

We’ll work on you and write over it. - Zak Weston

You can have a wonderful statement, but one missed word can really ruin the conservation. – Philip Spitzer

I don’t talk behind people’s backs in front of their faces.
- Chelsea Convis

Talented people can wiggle their toes inside their shoes.
- Josiah Blocki

I just wanted to see what a den of liars and deceivers looks like.
- Lennie Mailand

You guys are like my children. I’m so proud of you all. - An ADC

[Two chipmunks] will have a little Chippy. A chip off the old block.
- Dr. Lonnie Brown