

Editorial Opinion

Naples Daily News

"Give light and the people will find their own way"

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Estero election

Residents get chance to shape first council

Estero residents face a decision Tuesday that is just as important as last year's vote to incorporate.

A community doesn't often get to choose a majority of its elected leaders in a single ballot. That's the case now, with four Estero Village Council members to be chosen to complement three who won seats when nobody filed papers to challenge them.

With mail balloting nearly concluded and early voting having wrapped up, the final votes will come in Tuesday. Already on the Village Council are:

- Nick Batos, 70, from District 6, a retiree who has chaired the Estero Council of Community Leaders.
- Howard Levitan, 69, from District 2, a retired land-use attorney who has been active in the ECCL.
- William "Bill" Ribble Jr., 64, from District 1, who retired from United Parcel Service.

We see this as an opportunity for voters to fit together the pieces of a puzzle on a seven-member council. It's a panel that should have not only solid representation from the ECCL, but also voices from other civic groups and various demographics in Estero.

So, in search of a balanced council, we have endorsed:

- Donald Brown, 69, in District 3. He brings experience in governance and business.
- Katy Errington, 72, in District 4. She has proven civic involvement and a strong environmental agenda.
- Adam Waszkowski, 43, in District 5. He is a working professional who adds the important voice of families.
- Walter Zalisko, 58, in District 7. He has worked for more than 35 years in public safety and management, including law enforcement leadership positions.

Attorney general nominee

Committee approval noted for less rancor

Sadly, it's probably an aberration rather than hopeful signs of comity to come, but the Senate Judiciary Committee with a minimum of fuss and political grandstanding approved and sent to the full Senate for a final vote President Barack Obama's nomination of veteran federal prosecutor Loretta Lynch to be U.S. attorney general.

She faces almost certain confirmation, although not by the lopsided 95-3 approval given Ashton Carter, the president's choice for secretary of defense.

The committee vote was 12-8 with three influential Republican conservatives — Sens. Orrin Hatch of Utah, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Jeff Flake of Arizona — voting aye.

Lynch, 55, was the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York which covers most of New York City and Long Island and is considered by the Justice Department to be "one of the nation's premier litigation offices."

Those alone should have been sufficient credentials, but some Republicans still are steaming over Obama's executive orders on immigration and Lynch's testimony during her confirmation hearing that she would defend those orders in court, which as attorney general she is almost required to do.

The debate preceding her final vote will undoubtedly feature a rehash of Republican charges that Obama was guilty of constitutional overreach in issuing those executive orders.

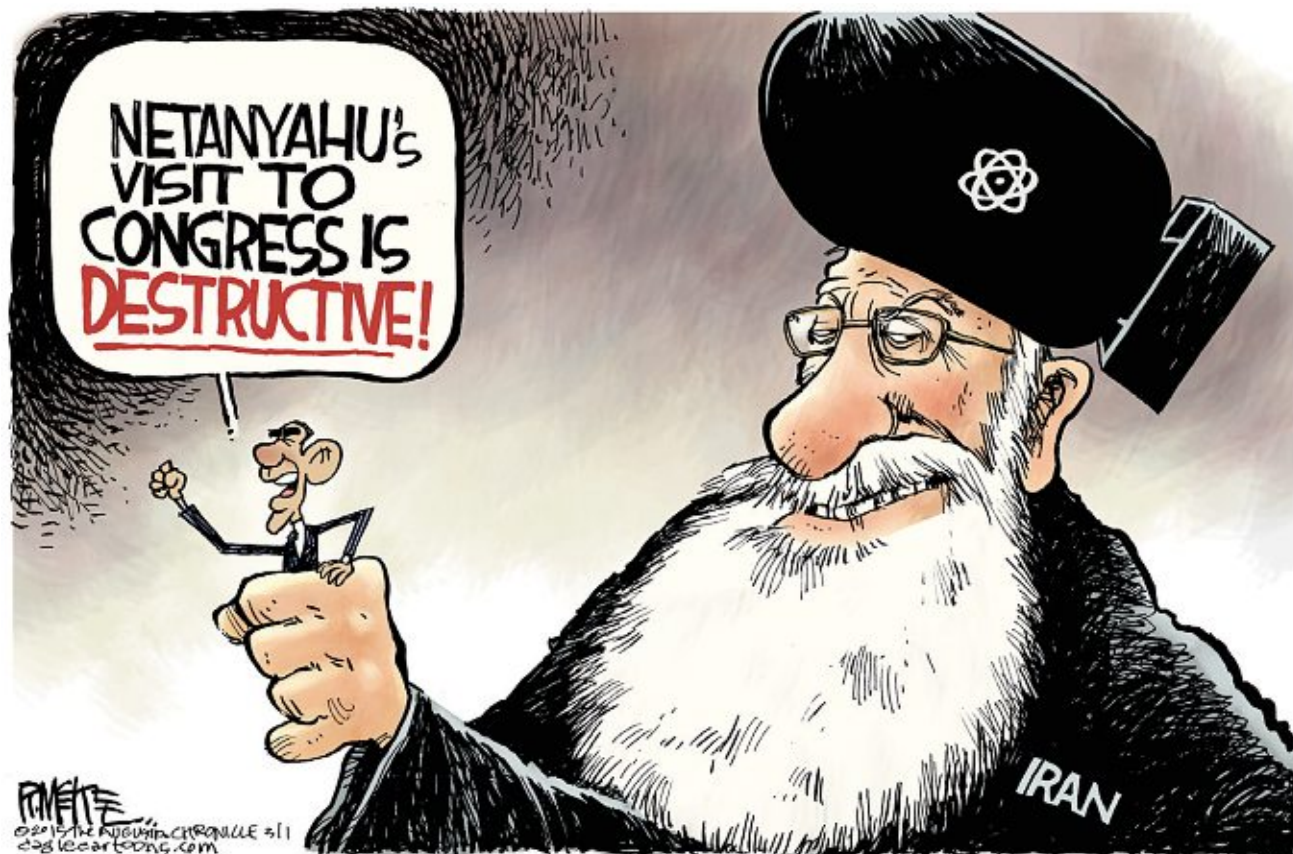
A deciding factor likely will be that her confirmations will mean the departure of incumbent Attorney General Eric Holder, with whom Republicans have regularly clashed.

GOP firebrands like Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas urged holding up all of Obama's nominees until the president relents on immigration, a public relations disaster for the GOP that understandably has picked up almost zero support from his fellow Republicans.

Besides, the constitutionality of those executive orders already is before the federal courts and, as Sen. Graham pointed out, those Republicans who felt strongly enough about the issue could try impeaching the president.

Apparently Obama's opponents do not feel so strongly that they would risk their political careers.

It may be too much to hope but the Lynch vote might signal a return to a principle that has served the country well: A president is entitled, barring some serious disqualification, to staff his administration with the people of his choice.



LETTERS

Linda Oberhaus, *Naples*
Executive director,
The Shelter for Abused Women & Children

Take threats seriously

Re: Feb. 23 commentary headlined "With domestic abuse, the menace can be in a threat" by Magistrate Judge Kevin Reed.

Reed raises concern stemming from the case of a man found guilty of violating the federal threat statute after posting death threats on Facebook. Attorneys for the man have appealed the case to the Supreme Court, arguing the posts were "therapeutic" and not intended to be taken seriously. The attorneys are seeking changes to the statute that would require proof of intent to act on threats — an extremely difficult, if not impossible burden.

Here at The Shelter for Abused Women & Children, we take all threats of violence very seriously. Statistics show that an abuser's threat to kill a partner is a precursor to domestic violence homicide. That is why our local law enforcement agencies partner with the shelter, allowing our advocates to review police reports, identify high lethality domestic violence cases and make immediate contact with these victims. Consequently, an essential indicator we look for is the threat of violence.

I agree with Reed that the Supreme Court should refuse to protect the manipulative behavior of abusers and hold them accountable for threats of violence. If we were able to reach into the mind and measure the intent of violent individuals, millions of lives could be saved every year. The unfortunate reality is that whether made against the state or an individual, threats of violence must be taken at face value. Anything less would set a dangerous legal precedent.

Georges Pardo, *Naples*

Obama sermon

Concerning President Barack Obama's remarks at a National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, they sounded like a sermon, not what I expected from the commander in chief of the United States of America.

This is a Western civilized country that for the last 20 years has been under attack by murderous Islamic terrorist organizations at a cost of thousands of innocent lives and billions of dollars in defensive measures — including military action in Iraq and Afghanistan.

History repeats itself: In the early 1800s, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison sent a fleet to the Mediterranean to fight the Berbers, or Muslim pirates, who were taking American sailors hostage — the Barbary Wars.

For anyone who read Mr. Obama's remarks, I recommend they Google Wikipedia's "History of Inquisition," "History of Slavery" and "The Barbary Wars (1800-1815)" before start-

Letter of the Day

Mary Lemasters, *Naples*

Wonderful voices

I am president of Voices of Naples, a 70-member community chorus performing in Collier and Lee counties for 13 years.

We strive to offer quality concerts in hopes of raising money to help deserving high school seniors who are looking to pursue their education in any form of vocal music education.

Voices of Naples has thus far awarded \$29,500 to 17 deserving seniors since 2007. In 2014, we awarded a total of \$3,500 in scholarship money to two students.

Our final date for applying for one of our scholarships is March 20, and we have had no applicants as yet. I find it impossible to think that there are no parents or students out there who have need for financial help in these difficult times.

I urge you to reach us at Voicesofnaples@yahoo.com or call our scholarship chairman, June Ricks, at 239-948-2865.

ing to beat their chest in repentance.

The Western countries, starting with the American Revolution, have been struggling for the last couple of centuries to achieve a more just and free world. It has been a difficult road. We should defend what we have accomplished not rationalize the motives of those who attack and want to destroy us.

Jim Adduci, *Naples and Boston*

A new disease

The new disease is memorititus. In fact, I had it many years ago.

One night, I went out with my friends to a strip club and later to a bar for some dancing with the babes.

When I got home, I was greeted by my wife. I found out I was married. I forgot. I had memorititus.

My wife didn't buy it. Go figure. I guess it only works if you are a liberal (Bill and Hillary Clinton, Brian Williams, Dan Rather, Charlie Rangel, Barack Obama ...).

Steve Kissell, *Naples*

Rudy's right

Rudy Giuliani had it right. Anyone who thinks that President Barack Obama is a patriot doesn't know what a patriot is. No patriot would sit and listen to hate-filled rants against America for 20 years spewed by the Rev. Jeremiah Wright. But Obama did.

No patriot would count among his associates a rabid America hater like William Ayers, who founded the terrorist group Weather Underground. This group is responsible for several bombings, including one at the Pentagon. Obama has a long-standing asso-

ciation with Ayers, including a fundraiser in Ayer's home. More recently, Ayers was featured on the front of a magazine showing his contempt for America by standing on the flag.

No patriot would explicitly reject the concept of American exceptionalism as Obama has. No patriot would take every opportunity to trash his own country abroad, as Obama has. No patriot would announce his intention to "fundamentally change" a country he loves.

And while we're at it, why is anyone surprised that Obama refused to march in Paris with other world leaders following the Charlie Hebdo slaughter by Muslim terrorists? After all, he had told the U.N. General Assembly "the future must not belong to those who slander the prophet of Islam."

Obama gets riled when someone criticizes Islam; he can't even bring himself to use the words Islam and terrorism in the same sentence. He has, however, no such problem with the slander of America.

Ann Berlam, *Naples*

Respect officeholders

It was disappointing to read the Feb. 25 letter to the editor headlined "Condescending" that contained personal attacks on Collier County School Board members.

One of the principles our forefathers established for us is the privilege to elect officials to represent us through the Congress, state legislatures and county offices, including local school boards.

The democracy of our country allows us to elect those officials who reflect diverse views. However, once an election is held, those duly elected officials are responsible for representing all their constituents, not just those who share only one point of view.

It is certainly acceptable to agree to disagree and to seek common ground on which solid decisions can be reached. This is called compromise and it is necessary for good government. It is totally unacceptable to personally attack duly elected officials just because they do not espouse one particular constituency's point of view.

Give and take, listening to all points of view and making informed decisions are the least we can expect from all elected officials. It is the respect for one another's views that makes democracy work.

Irving Skinner, *Naples and Peterborough, Ontario*

Clone

Hardly seems possible, but the Republican Party seems somehow to have cloned Donald Trump and Sarah Palin into one Rudy Giuliani.

If Mr. Giuliani had any relevance, save for the most absurd political conversations, I would wish them good luck with that.