

Letters to the Editor

Spurious arguments/name calling

I have learned much from James J. Mischler Jr. I have learned that he doesn't really seem to understand the definitions of either "communism" or "socialism" (distinguished sharply by Karl Marx; let's assume *he* had a basic grip on the terms). Nor does he seem to have a particularly good definition of "fascism," given that it is at odds with Mussolini's (again assuming *he* had a basic grip on the term).

Moving from a strategy of name-calling, based on inaccurate definitions, Mr. Mischler moves to sheer name calling. "Liberals" can't win arguments, but "Conservatives" do; liberals make decisions emotionally, while conservatives do so rationally. In addition to these terms being wholly unclear, the notion is fundamentally absurd. While it isn't Mr. Mischler's approach to offer actual evidence, plenty of liberals have won plenty of arguments, from Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson (they could be liberals, I suppose) to FDR and

the recent dispute between the rational McCain and the emotional Obama. Evidence, rules of inference, proportionality can't get in Mr. Mischler's way: it is much more important that he call Obama an "Acorn Fascist" (now qualifying one ill-defined term with one undefined term). This, evidently, qualifies as rationality.

For sake of full disclosure, I have played in a disturbingly competitive wiffle ball league with Glen Cebulash for two years. He has not only reasoned on occasion, I have witnessed him win more than one argument; indeed, even with a "conservative." He cites evidence, and constructs arguments based on accepted definitions and rules of inference. This is in welcome contrast to Mr. Mischler, who evidently remains content to channel his inner Ann Coulter through the lens of Charles Dickens' Samuel Pickwick.

**Kurt Mosser
Oakwood**

Liberal/conservative labels divisive

In response to last weeks letter to the editor "Liberalism vs. Conservatism it is unfortunate that in the America of the here and now too many people are dividing this country into two major camps – liberals and conservatives. The United States of America is too diverse and complex to be defined in such narrow terms. It is my hope and wish that the educated members of our society will start to take this country in a new direction and redefine it as Americanism and stop putting divisive label on all of us. When the towers came down in New York in Sept. of 2001 we responded as unified Americans, not as liberals and conservatives. This division is hurting this country and must stop.

I have recently written a book on the life of my father and a simpler time in the life of this country and as I travel the country doing book signings I see a divisiveness in this country as I have never

seen before. It's just plain wrong and we need to accept each other as fellow Americans.

As I move forward to begin more work related to my book, I look at projects that will help and be of benefit to my fellow citizens of Dayton/Oakwood/Kettering. I don't look at my work in terms of liberals and conservatives, but in terms of Americanism. I would like to see all of my fellow Americans, as they work to pick up the pieces of their lives after this recent recession, keep in mind that we are all proud Americans regardless of our beliefs. If you remain divided, any work I do or others do in the hopes of helping this region remain vibrant will be for naught. Think in terms of a unified America and unified Ohioan's. In the end we all want the same thing, "Life, Liberty and Happiness.

**Edward Breen
Kettering**

A kid's-eye view of Wright Library

I want to tell you how I feel about the Wright Library. I think that the library gives us all a good education. I really like to check out books at the library. Since I was three years old and I moved to Dayton, I've been going to the library. I love to take the summer reading challenges. This summer, I read 16 chapter

books for the first time. Reading is one of my hobbies. I've taken an art and science class at the library, too. I think the library is a very important part of our community. If our library was no longer here, I'd be pretty sad.

**Richard Roediger
Age 7**

0.5 mill library levy needed in November

The Wright Memorial Public Library Board of Trustees is asking Oakwood voters to approve an additional 0.5 mill levy this November 3. The 0.5 mill levy would generate an additional \$158,000 each year for 5 years.

Why are we asking?

The board is making this request because the State of Ohio has substantially reduced its support for all public libraries. In July, the state's Public Library Fund was cut 11 percent on top of a 20 percent drop caused by low tax receipts. Wright Library's revenue from state funding is expected to be about 30 percent lower next year than it was in 2008. This makes a significant difference because most of the library's funding comes from the state's Public Library Fund (80 percent in 2008). In 2001, Wright Library received \$1,590,739 from the state. By 2008, that amount had dropped to \$1,444,634. The library expects to receive about \$1,076,000 in state support in 2009 and approximately \$997,000 in 2010.

What has the library already done to deal with the situation?

The library has already made deep cuts in its budget by not filling vacant positions, instituting a pay freeze and staff furloughs, delaying equipment upgrades, and spending less for new library materials. Wright Library is trying other ways besides taxes to increase its revenue. Fundraisers help some, but they don't provide enough additional revenue to make a big difference.

How much will it cost?

The cost is an additional \$1.46 per month for each \$100,000 of assessed property value, or \$17.52 more annually. We are asking for the least amount possible that would allow us to maintain current library hours and keep the library's resources available at a level that will be sustainable in the tough economy.

How will the money be used?

It will be used to maintain current library hours. The money will be used for the library's operating

expenses such as books and other new items for patrons, utilities, salaries, and property maintenance.

What will happen if the levy doesn't pass?

If the levy fails, the library will have to reduce hours of operation, probably closing one day a week. There will be three to five programs for children, teens, and adults each week instead of eight to ten. The budget for new materials will be cut to about 60 percent of what was spent in 2008. There will be fewer staff to help patrons. The library's capacity to serve will be greatly diminished.

What does Wright Library offer the community?

The library offers value for all ages. There are programs for preschoolers to help them develop early literacy skills, books and electronic resources to support the K-12 curriculum, fun programs to help students maintain and improve their reading skills, computers for public use with high-speed Internet and Office software, wireless Internet access, research help, online research databases available through the library's Web site, informative and entertaining programs for teens and adults, large print books, and thousands of books, magazines, audio books, CDs, and movies for lifelong learning and leisure time enjoyment. Wright Library is an Oakwood landmark and a welcoming community gathering place.

Is there an endowment from the Wright family that supports the library?

Wright Library is not supported by an endowment from the Wrights (or anyone else). The library has an historical connection with the Wrights. The building was constructed on Katharine Wright Park and Orville Wright served on the Board of Trustees from 1934 to 1947.

Who can use Wright Library?

Residents of local communities other than Oakwood may use Wright Library, just as Oakwood residents may use the

Dayton Metro Library and the Washington-Centerville Library without paying the library taxes in those communities. To accept the state funding that makes up a large portion of its revenue, Wright Library must offer cards to any resident of the county. Oakwood residents currently provide a lower percentage of the revenue for Wright Library than Dayton and Centerville residents provide for their libraries. Wright Library currently has a 0.94 mill levy, which provided 12 percent of its revenue in 2008. Washington-Centerville Library has a 2.70 mill levy that provides 55 percent of its revenue. The Dayton Metro Library currently has a 1.25 mill levy, providing 30 percent of its revenue. The metro library hopes to have Dayton residents approve a 1.75 mill levy this November, which would increase their percentage of local revenue to 50 percent. Passing Oakwood's additional 0.5 mill levy would bring Wright Library's percentage of local revenue up to about 30 percent.

Who should I contact for more information?

If you would like more information about library finances or operations, please feel free to contact board members, the library's director Ann Snively, or fiscal officer Debra Schenk.

We urge you to vote "yes" for Wright Library on November 3.

We hope that our library is as valued to you and your family as it has been to our families. We believe there are two institutions which quietly, year after year, have kept Oakwood an enlightened community: our schools and our library. We should cherish and support both.

Wright Memorial Public Library Board of Trustees:

**Beverly Jones-Arthur, President
Michael Roediger, Secretary
Alan Halpern
Richard Smith**

**Lori Mitchell, Vice president
John Green
Pamela Menafee**

A great debate

Thanks to Mr. Mischler's illuminating letter, I have concluded a couple of things:

1) Rep. Joe Wilson of South Carolina is a liberal, as he is given to emotional outbursts and not rational debate. 2) Most people don't have a good grip on the definitions of socialism, communism and fascism.

But the best conclusion is: we

have some darn funny people in our town! A big round of applause to Mr. Cebulash and Mr. Mischler for making me (and surely many others) laugh heartily for the past two weeks. The biggest hoot for me was the way Mr. Mischler presented us with what seemed like a "logical" (one might even say "rational") argument that led to zingers like this one: "Therefore,

I conclude that Mr. Obama is an Acorn Fascist". I was howling in laughter on that one!!

Good job to you both! At least humor has not gone out of the debate!!

**Caryn Connelly
Oakwood**