

Kurt Johnson returns with his weekly column.

"Even if we would have gotten beat here today, that was one hell of a comeback." Basketball coach Eddie Fogler

VIEWPOINTS

The Gamecock

Serving the Carolina Community since 1908

EDITORIAL BOARD

Adam Snyder, Editor in Chief
Amy Shannon, Viewpoints Editor
Kurt Johnson, Assistant Viewpoints Editor

TAKE OUR WORD

USC dishonest in ice hockey offer

By 2001, USC's men's basketball team will be competing in a brand new sports arena. The arena will be part of a civic complex that will include a regional conference center.

PROBLEM

USC's proposal for the new sports arena included ice hockey. Now the offer has changed.

SOLUTION

USC must stick to what was originally said.

By 2001, USC's men's basketball team will be competing in a brand new sports arena. The arena will be part of a civic complex that will include a regional conference center.

USC told the council the sports arena would be used for many events including minor league ice hockey. Lexington agreed to contribute money to the arena with the understanding that it would be home to ice hockey as well as other activities.

Now USC is saying ice hockey was never a "specific" part of the deal and that accommodating ice hockey might cost too much.

USC should stick to the original proposal and include ice hockey on its bill of fare for the new arena. It is dishonest and unfair of USC to have convinced Lexington to pay for part of the arena and then change the original plans.

And in the future, when USC goes to Lexington County for mon-

Thousands of people in South Carolina enjoy watching ice hockey. It doesn't matter if they're Southern, Northern, black, white, or purple. Shouldn't USC be setting an example by promoting societal harmony? Instead, we're alienating people in the community.

The whole situation is making USC look extremely bad. Opponents of ice hockey claim it will cost too much. But considering the success of ice hockey teams in cities around Columbia, it would pay for itself after a few years.

Lexington was told they'd have ice hockey, and they should have it, especially since they're financing the arena. It's USC's responsibility to stand by its word and support ice hockey.

Sweepstakes letter needs revisions

For the second time in four months, Richard Lusk thought he had won the American Family Publisher's sweepstakes so he flew to Tampa, Fla. Thursday to claim his alleged \$11 million prize.

PROBLEM

Sweepstakes letters mislead people into thinking they've won.

SOLUTION

Magazine sales companies must reword their mass mailings.

within the five day deadline.

The tiny print describing the conditions of the mailings should be enlarged so it's not so minuscule it can't be read. The true nature of the mailings should not be hidden behind the slim chance of winning millions.

The million dollar carrot that magazine sales companies dangle in front of people takes advantage of their situations and weaknesses.

Elderly Americans may have trouble reading the fine print. Other people are simply naive and gullible to the irresistible possibility of winning money. Still others cling to the letter's proclamation that they are the next big winner.

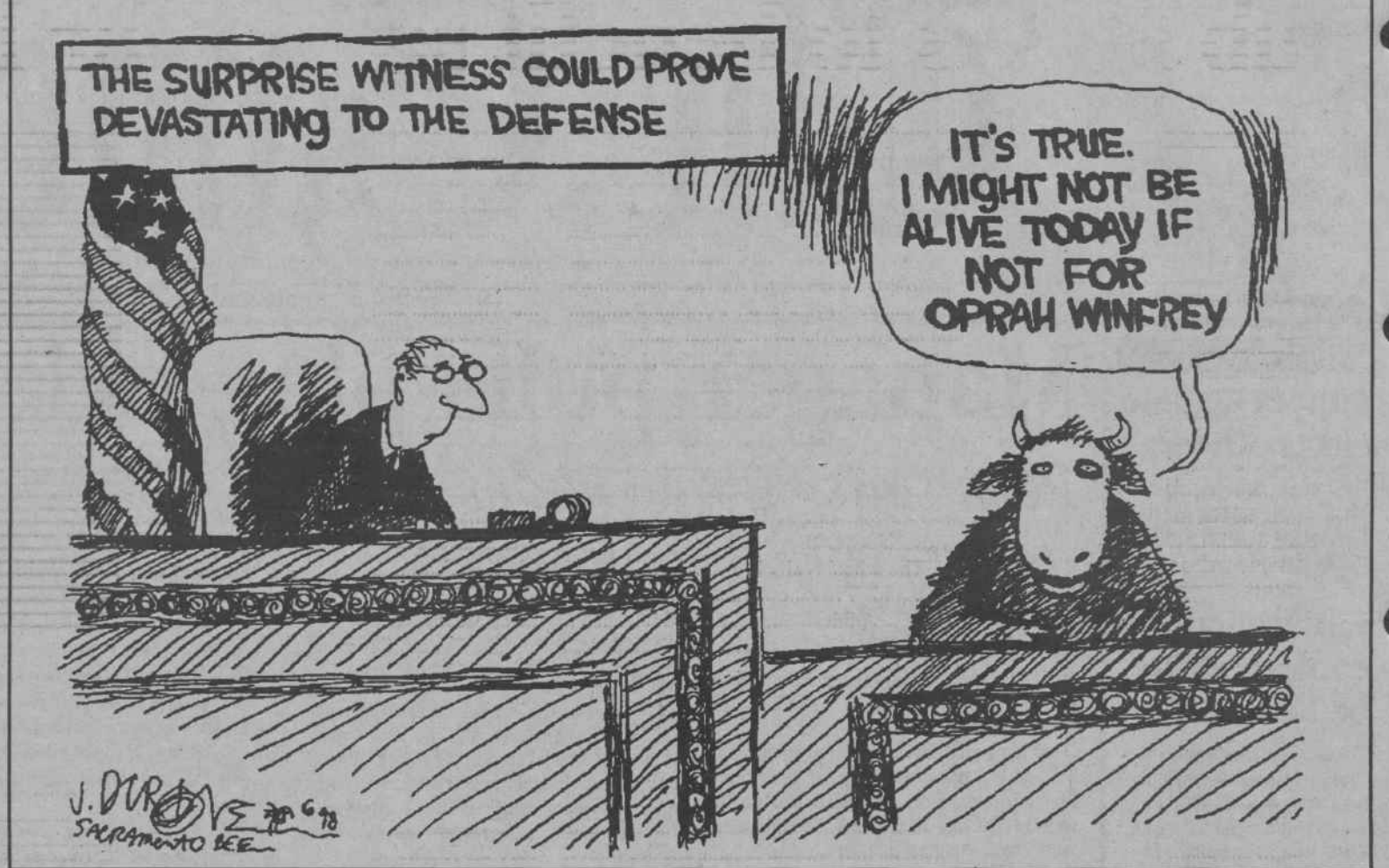
Not only are these letters misleading, but they are annoying. It's frustrating to find so many of these mailings clogging up a person's mailbox. Most people throw them out right away and regard them as a waste of paper.

But the 88-year-old man from Calif. was mistaken. The small print in the mailing he had received said he would have won only if he held the winning ticket.

The incident brings up the question of whether sweepstakes companies should be able to use such misleading mailings in an effort to get people to subscribe to magazines.

Over the past four years, 20 people have flown to Tampa International Airport thinking they have won, according to The State. That's 20 individuals whose hopes were built up and then dashed to bits as a result of a gimmick to buy magazines.

These mailings truly are deceiving and must be changed or banned.



college press EXCHANGE

Name tags not for friendship

Late at night, the residents of my building can, even now, occasionally hear the maniacal giggles of someone in a first floor apartment as a young sales clerk (that would be me) recovers from yet another holiday season in the mall.



emily STREYER Guest Columnist

SOME people believe sales clerks are another species. Believe me, we think a few things about you customers, too. But I won't dispute that belief just yet.

I'll use it in order to do the consumer world a service by explaining a bit about this strangely misunderstood breed of creature. The mystery of why sales clerks wear name tags is solved.

We wear them so you can identify us as staff in case it's not clear that the well-dressed people wondering whether someone is finding everything okay are, indeed, the salespeople.

We also wear them so that you may report exceptionally helpful or excep-

tionally rude behavior to our supervisor. In the event that getting what you need involves several phone calls, you can say who helped you the last time, which expedites the process.

We do not wear name tags so you can summon us to your service or greet us when you walk in. Any clerk will tell you he or she cringes at, "Ah, excuse me, Emily, I'd like to see a chess set now."

The fact that you know a sales clerk's name doesn't make the two of you buddies. Until a person has introduced himself or herself, it's inappropriate and a bit rude to call someone else by name.

Miss, ma'am or sir will suffice and will get you better service. We really don't need your life story. The relevant facts are all we really want to know. Here's a true example:

Guy: Hi. Do you have any bingo sets?

Me: Sure do. They're right here.

Guy: Oh, wow, great. Great. I might come back and get it tomorrow.

Me: Great. We have plenty of them, so they'll be here waiting.

Guy: Okay. Wow. Uh, I guess you were wondering why I wanted one. Man, I really hate to leave people hanging, so I guess I'll just tell you. Okay, my girlfriend had a fight with her ex-

"We do not wear name tags so you can summon us to your service or greet us when you walk in. The fact that you know a sales clerk's name doesn't make the two of you buddies."

boyfriend while they were in his car, and he, like, kicked her out of the car, like in the middle of the road, and so she walked to my friend's where we all were, and we went to church, and they were playing bingo there and so we played too, and we had a really good time. So when we dropped her off at home, we told her dad what a good time we had, and then he paid for all of us to go play bingo again the next night. And so we thought, as a joke, we'd get him a bingo set for Christmas.

Me: Okay, great. Well, we have bingo sets.

Guy: Yeah, thanks.

And just so you know how professional I am, I didn't giggle once throughout the whole thing.

It's stuff like this (and worse, believe me, much worse) that causes us to go to the Waffle House afterward and tell stupid customer stories.

Finally, realize that salespeople are most territorial about the cash register. Don't come behind it.

We're happy to invite you to step around if you ask first. The same reasoning is behind asking someone to pass the salt instead of reaching over the plate or having the receptionist make an appointment for you instead of grabbing the calendar and doing it yourself.

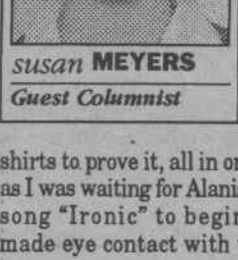
Do you notice a theme here? The key to an enjoyable retail experience is remembering we're not an alien species. We're people who happen to wear name tags.

When you treat a sales clerk like another person instead of someone who is apparently responsible for you running late, you'll be amazed at the improvement of the service you get. Really, try it. Happy shopping.

Friends there for group therapy

Last Friday, I was in the company of good friends doing the normal Five Points crawl, and as all nights should end, we dipped into Group Therapy for the final evening beverage.

As luck would have it, I stumbled into four former boyfriends. No, that wasn't a misprint. I saw four has-beens, four been there, done that, and got the t-shirts to prove it.



SUSAN MEYERS Guest Columnist

As I was waiting for Alanis Morissette's song "Ironic" to begin playing, I made eye contact with them one by one.

One guy offered the casual "hey, how's it going" and bought me a shot. One updated me on his new-found love for reptiles, and another insinuated that I must be on a date because I was out. The fourth, and most recent, guy cut his eyes at me then signaled for me to come to him.

My only thought at this point was one shared by Ally McBeal: a horse's ass and what comes out of it. Once he realized that no line of BS could sugarcoat or repair the damage already done to our pseudo-relationship, he said, "If there's anything that I can do, anything at all..."

Though the thought of a couple hundred dollars did enter my mind, I quickly responded with "disappear."

As it should be no surprise to any USC student, there are no degrees of separation around this town, and eventually you will be in a room full of people you know. However, I didn't think that they would be the majority of the

"As luck would have it, I stumbled into four former boyfriends. No, that wasn't a misprint. I saw four has-beens, four been there, done that, and got the t-shirts to prove it."

guy that I have dated during my college career.

But isn't it ironic that I went to a bar to enjoy free spirits and conversation among good friends, and I also was indulged with closure? And could the name of the bar have been more appropriate? Group Therapy?

Although "Ironic" never came on, a more fitting song did. "I Will Survive" blared through the bar hall speakers, and all my friends gathered in a circle, dancing, clapping and singing at the top of their lungs: "At first I was afraid. I was petrified. Kept thinking I could never live

without you by my side. But then I spent so many nights thinking how you did me wrong, and I grew strong, and I learned how to get along. And so you're back from outer space. I just walked in to find you here with that sad look upon your face."

There was a light bulb flickering on in my head that made me realize there was a reason I was there. Sometimes all you need is your friends to stand behind you. Sometimes all you need is a little "group therapy."

The Gamecock

STUDENT MEDIA RUSSELL HOUSE USC COLUMBIA, SC 29208

The Gamecock is the student newspaper of The University of South Carolina and is published Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the fall and spring semesters and five times during the summer with the exception of university holidays and exam periods.

Table with columns: WHO WE ARE, HOW TO REACH US, and contact information for staff members like Adam Snyder, Amy Shannon, etc.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Love of Christ not forced onto anyone else

To the editor, As a Christian, I, too, am concerned about others' relationships with Jesus Christ, but as Ecclesiastes 3 states, "There is a time and a season for everything..."

Instead, He woos them to Jesus Christ through love. I don't believe you have to force the gospel of Jesus Christ on anyone. I believe you have to be obedient to do what the Lord shows and tells you to do.

The Lord exemplified how we as Christians are to conduct our lives. He was gentle and loving, yet firm. He preferred others above Himself. He was a servant and He sought the Father's perfect will in every situation.

Speaking of love, Ms. Dames, who do you know that loves you as much as Jesus Christ did and does? He loved each of us so much that He willingly gave up His life for us, the ultimate sacrifice that anyone could make.

He loves each of us right where we are and without question. I, for one, am very thankful that He loved me and loves me so very much. I would not care to live my life without Him.

Editorial cartoonists, we need you!

Interested in being an editorial cartoonist?

Bring a sample to room 333 of the Russell House or call 777-7726.

Take our word.