

# Letters to Editor

Dear Editor,

Sometimes common sense is not very common. This becomes apparent when I read of yet another criminal who decides to pull a gun or other weapon on a police officer in our city. In an ideal world, such perps would surrender peacefully and face the music. Instead, they choose to go down in a blaze of what they think is glory.

This begs the question, "Why do people think that they will come out ahead in a situation where they cannot win?"

I have an answer. Blatant disregard for authority is learned from an early age. It is in our schools that students do not face real consequences for their actions. First, the school system no longer expels students. I can understand that we do not want to limit students' opportunities in life. I believe, however, that we are sending the wrong message to those students who want to obey the rules and laws that they must share classrooms with rank criminals.

I applaud the alternative schools\* in our district but we all know that those students eventually end up back in their schools again to terrorize teachers and students alike.

Furthermore, the problem is that police officers' hands are tied when it comes to

arresting students who break the law. I don't see why our police officers cannot handcuff students who violate the laws that would easily get them arrested if they commit the same offenses off campus.

It is no wonder that many young people believe that they are bulletproof in the real world because of the kid glove treatment that they are accustomed to. It is essential that we start early with introducing young people to the criminal justice system so that they realize that their actions have consequences.

Sincerely,  
John L. Meeks, Jr.

*\*Students who have chronic disciplinary problems are sent to alternative schools for a designated period of time.*

## The Power of the Pen

I wonder if you are as perplexed as I am sometimes by what occurs on the local, state and national scene? Not only are we astounded by various governmental actions, or lack thereof, but the media have also contributed to our concern over what is happening in our community, as well as in our nation.

What too often is presented as news seems to be filtered through a liberal screen. When slanted "news" is repeated often enough on an issue, the

impact on public policy can be more harmful than helpful. A case in point is the continual reminder by local [media] of the number of police shootings in Jacksonville this year. They do this every time a police officer is forced to take this action, and the implication is that police shootings are bad.

Fortunately, some excellent letters supporting police efforts to combat crime have been published in the local newspaper. By writing letters to the newspaper and community leaders, local citizens who value an aggressive attack on crime can counteract the efforts of those whose efforts appear anything but supportive of a strong stand against crime in our neighborhoods.

Keep sending those letters! If enough of us do this often enough, we will contribute a great deal toward making our community a safer and better place to live.

- Larry Moore

I am writing to urge citizens to register all items in their homes, such as TVs, VCRs, DVD players, stereo equipment, appliances - everything that can be stolen and sold by thieves. These items can be returned to you if you have a police report and you list the model/serial

numbers on the report. It only takes a few moments to document your identifying numbers and may mean the difference in whether you recover your possessions.

My elderly parents were victimized by burglars who stole their 60" TV, 42" TV, DVD player and PlayStation gifts for grandchildren. The items were pawned and because the serial numbers were recorded, my parents were notified and the items recovered.


- Angela Howard  
Jacksonville

*(Editor's Note: JSO Sgt. Robert Troxel (Burglary) advises that victims who don't know serial numbers at the time they report a burglary can call back with this information which will be added to the incident report. If the stolen item is pawned, reputable dealers will usually sell the item (for what he paid for it) back to the owner who provides proof of purchase or ownership. All dealers are required to record a thumbprint of the person selling the item, which is immediately run through JSO's databank. Detectives also can review surveillance photos of the transaction. For possessions without serial numbers, such as jewelry, Troxel also suggests keeping a photo for future identification purposes.)*

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