

# Dick Bishop sighted in Florida

The heck with Elvis Presley—in my mind a dear friend has just rejoined the world. I've made some boo-boos in my column over the years, but I've reached the depths by announcing someone is deceased when he is alive and well and living in Florida. A friend of mine and relative of Richard Bishop, former chairman of the Galesburg Downtown Village Council and president of First Galesburg National Bank and Trust, kindly informed me, after reading last week's column, that Mr. Bishop is indeed alive. What wonderful news!! Over ten years ago I read in a Quad-City paper that a Richard Bishop who was in the banking business had died and I had no doubt it was my former boss and mentor when I worked for the Downtown Council.

My apologies to his family and friends for my premature and ill-advised announcement. Fortunately for me, my friend said he thought Dick would be amused. Frankly, I don't think I would, but he is a classy guy - and how nice to use the present tense.

While I'm mopping up from previous columns, I might tell you some of the reactions I've received from others. As a result of my two columns about rich farmers lapping up welfare assistance, I received an invitation to lunch with representatives of the local and Illinois Farm Bureau. We had a good time and the lunch was delicious. A 6'9" farmer from Alexis invited me over for coffee not long ago, said something like "you need to know the truth," and I haven't been there yet. I will go. I received a postcard from a woman who said my column was "right on-if only it were required reading."

Several e-mails from all over the country have been received about my reference to the "My Great Recipes" card series which has been discontinued. We have a little club now, which is lovely for them, but as I've mentioned before, my kitchen is for sale.

A few people agreed that since everyone is feeling so patriotic for a change, a basic patriotic act would be to register and vote. Flying the flag on cars, buses, schools, houses, and motorcycles just isn't enough to preserve our freedoms.

Received a nice call from, Roger Taylor, president of Knox College, about last week's column on local alums who make a difference.

Last year a farmer living near Carthage brought the Zephyr into the office of the Hancock County Clerk and showed him my column entitled "Methinks thou protest too much." It was about Republicans constantly defending the 2000 election debacle in Florida by blaming the stupidity of elderly,



poor and immigrant voters and skirting the issue of inept judges, goofy ballots and deliberate disenfranchisement. According to the County Clerk, the farmer said, "Be sure you read this article by this lady." Several readers responded similarly.

On the same subject, a local woman sent me a copy of an e-mail from friends in Florida, which contained bigoted and inflammatory remarks about who ought to be allowed to vote. Hitler, here we come.

Another former Galesburger writes occasionally from Tempe, Ariz. He's very complimentary in general, and says, "Reminds me of what I miss about the 'burg: free-thinking people."

Another friend who's moved out of town; "just read the anti-Moffitt one. AMEN. It's gotta be said. I remember Judy's campaign (McCrery, 1992) and the load of guano that Don threw at her. Phew! You go girl!"

Of course, those who violently disagree with me don't send private e-mails, they write public letters to the editor so we can all share.

My favorite letter to the editor was obviously from the guy from Chicago who

discovered the Zephyr online and e-mailed the boss,"—let me concede that the bulk of the time I was able to spend on the Zephyr was used reading your Caroline Porter columns... "What an intelligent guy he must be.

As for my columns on the Boy Scout, United Way controversy and the issue of homosexuality, a friend e-mailed, "Just read your article in the Zephyr ...keep up the great work." My detractors spilled venom all over the "letters to the editor" page. A woman wrote long letters to me about heterosexual men in leadership positions who had bullied her son, didn't think sexual orientation was very important.

I receive e-mails from totally unexpected sources. A gentleman in Galesburg responded to my column "Don't put me in one of your crummy categories," by saying, "I've always found your perspective refreshing. Keep up the good work!"

Got a real diatribe from a retired gentleman from Florida, originally from Galesburg. He was infuriated with one of my political columns, said I had a "weak mind," among other charming things, and concluded, "P.S. You are probably one of those that thinks that "Prairie Fire" is a better name for Knox than "Old Siwash." I answered: "Well, happy Easter to you, too!" And assured him that I thought changing the college nickname was an awful and unnecessary move.

Compliments from my writer/author/editor brother are always cherished. Even though he's my sibling, he is a tough critic. He says, "I think you write clearly, forcefully, and in a well-organized fashion. ...you at least match some of the columnists I see in Chicago and surpass many of them." Bless his brotherly heart.

I print out and file every e-mail I receive. Thanks to everyone who lets me know how I'm doing.

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