

OPINION

OUR VIEW

Equipped with information

If the proverb “it takes a village to raise a child” is true, it only makes sense that a community arm itself with information to establish a foundation that encourages treating everyone with dignity and respect.

A program at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at Backus Auditorium on bullying aims to equip everyone associated with a school, which we see as the entire community, with the same information on what constitutes bullying and the steps to prevent bullying behavior.

The program, “No Child Should Be Afraid To Go To School, Preventing Bullying Parent Program,” should provide valuable information everyone should want to know.

Presented by Jim Jelinske, Thursday’s informational session is expected to include: defining bullying behavior, prevention and intervention strategies, and what parents need to know when their child is bullied.

The session will also include a question and answer period.

We urge anyone with

a connection to a student or the school — and that means parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles and friends — to attend this session.

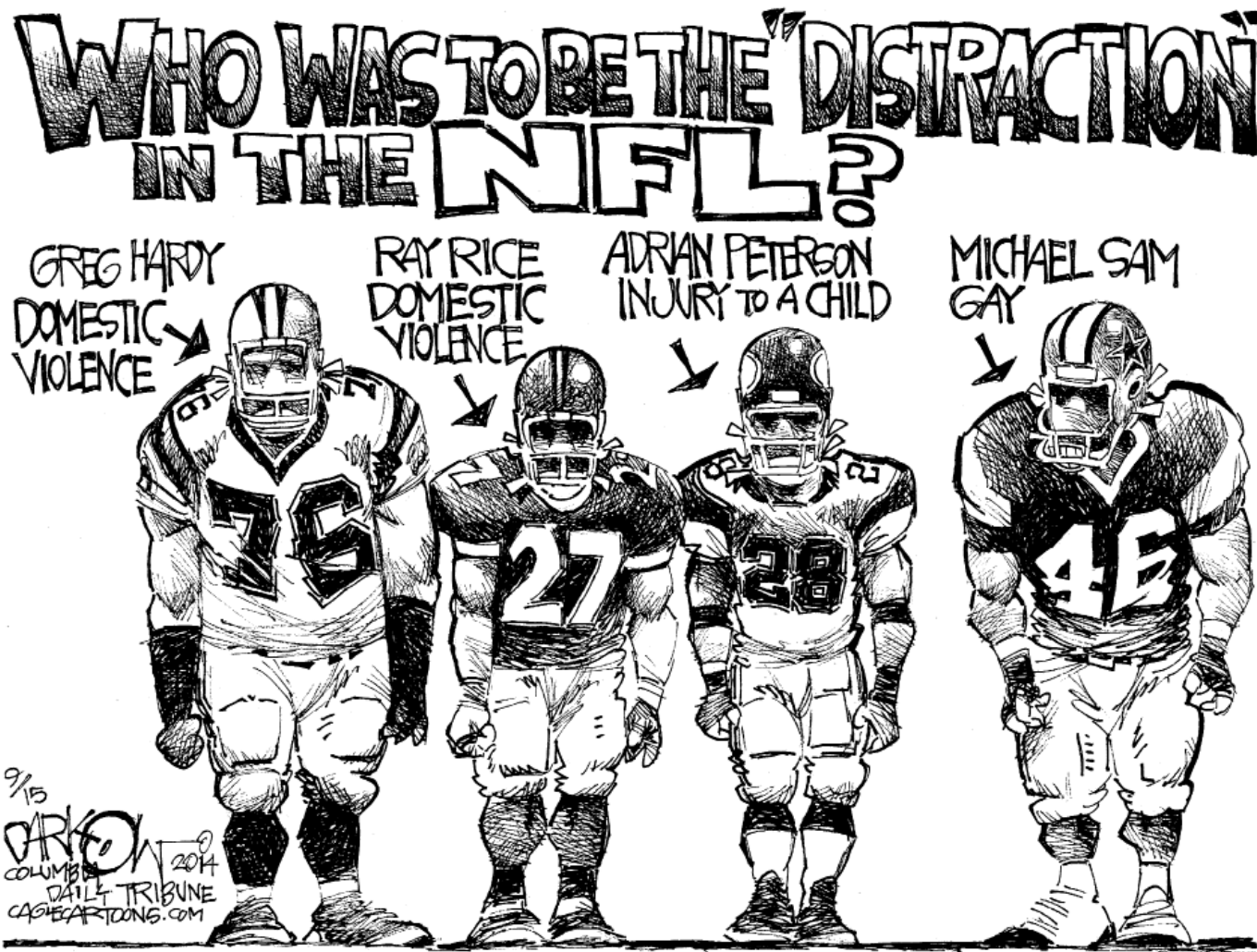
In an effort to make it easier for community members with young children to attend, child care will be offered at Backus.

Falls Elementary Principal Melissa Tate invited International Falls school board members to attend and gave Jelinske’s presentation high marks, noting it is based on personal experience.

Tate says the term bullying is overused and is often applied to what is actually conflict among students, who are taught how to work through the issue. She said the number of documented bullying cases at Falls schools is low.

Understanding what is bullying is crucial if it is to be handled properly. Tate encouraged any parent who feels their child is being bullied or is bullying others to attend Jelinske’s session. We echo her sentiment and encourage anyone connected to a student to attend Thursday’s program.

FIRST AMENDMENT “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”



GUEST COLUMN

The media’s lynching of Ray Rice

Let’s get to the burning national media issue of the week — Ray Rice and spousal abuse.

All the professional media moralizers are jumping on the politically correct Rice soapbox to prove to each other how much they are against physically abusing women.

As if anyone is in favor of it.

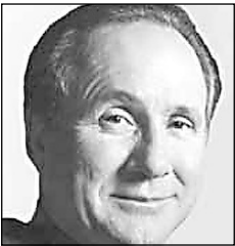
Rice knocked out his bride-to-be Janay in a casino elevator last February. That’s about the only thing clear from the elevator footage TMZ released to the world.

How he knocked her out — with a punch or a push — isn’t clear. Did she spit in his face? Looks like it on the video.

Did she hit him first? Apparently. Did both of them hit or spit at the other? Maybe. Were they both drunk, stupid and nasty to each other? Seems so.

All those annoying facts and nuances are not certain, and probably never will be. But they don’t matter to the old and new media.

Those few seconds of silent and grainy elevator video were all the news media, the Ravens’ ownership and the NFL front office needed to try,



Michael REAGAN

MAKING SENSE

convict and sentence Rice to a prime-time lynching.

No one dared to say a word in Rice’s defense. I even heard conservatives who should know better saying things like “There’s never an excuse to hit a woman.”

Never? Really? What if a woman is about to hit you in the face with a baseball bat? Or your wife is chasing you with a butcher knife? Or the WWE’s women’s champion is about to break you over her knee?

The knee-jerk reaction to what Rice did reminds me of what happened in Ferguson, Mo., when a white cop shot and killed an unarmed young black man.

We immediately were assured that Michael Brown was an innocent, peaceful young man and the latest example of bad

behavior by a racist cop in America.

Many sensible people, especially conservatives, said, “Hold on a minute. We first need to find out what really happened before the shooting.”

What did Brown do or not do to the officer before he was shot? Did he punch him or try to grab his weapon?

Until we get all the facts, they said, we can’t make Brown as an innocent victim and we can’t hang the cop.

Fact-finding is too late for Ray Rice and his career. No trial is required. He’s guilty as charged by the media. Next case, please.

Unfortunately, and without excusing a thing the Rices did to each other, Ray Rice has become, at least for this week, the dirty face of domestic violence in America.

When the media are done exploiting him, beating up on the NFL’s “culture of violence” and pretending they care deeply about America’s problem with domestic abuse, they’ll move on to exploit the next hot ratings-grabber.

Just as our child abuse problem disappeared in the media after the Sandusky case at Penn

State, domestic abuse will quickly fall off their radar screens again.

Domestic violence is a real problem that won’t go away. An estimated 1.2 million women will be abused by their husbands every year.

The abuse will continue to occur in all kinds of marriages and within all age ranges, ethnic backgrounds and economic levels.

Women are the victims 85 percent of the time, but men are abused verbally and emotionally, and sometimes even physically.

Domestic violence is never acceptable, no matter who does it or how it occurs. But until another celebrity case comes along, with video footage, you can bet the national media won’t even mention it.

Reagan is the son of President Ronald Reagan, a political consultant, and the author of “The New Reagan Revolution” (St. Martin’s Press). His column is distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons newspaper syndicate. This column has been edited by the author. Representations of fact and opinions are solely those of the author.

How to contact your lawmakers

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The Journal welcomes letters from readers

Letters should be limited to 500 words or less. Longer letters may be edited. Letters must be signed and include the telephone number and address of the letter writer. Only the author’s city address will be published.

Mail letters to The Journal, 1602 Highway 71, International Falls 56649. Letters can also be sent by e-mail to laurel@ifallsjournal.com.

Candidate letter policy

The beginning of 2014 brought a new policy to The Journal. A charge of \$30 will be required to publish letters to the editor from candidates or about candidates. The letters must be 500 words or less and the fee must be paid prior to the letter being published. The name and city of the author will be published with the letter. Letters may be emailed to laurel@ifallsjournal.com. The Journal will publish a deadline for publication of paid election letters prior to the Aug. 12 primary and Nov. 4 general elections.