

Letters to the editor addressing candidates and issues in the May 4 primary election must include the writer's name, full address and a phone number at which the writer can be reached during the day or to a phone with an answering machine. Letters without this information will not be considered.

candidate. I know Nick Metel is the right man for Allen County Council.

*Honor Leanne Derbyshire*

## Thanks to all who helped with our son

There are so many people who have made a difference in our lives since our son Timothy Kyle Ladig-Carter was taken ill of a brain stem tumor and went to heaven on March 2. We would like to thank some very special people who have helped to make a difference in Timmy's life since his illness: The Make a Wish Foundation, The Ronald McDonald House in Indianapolis, The New Haven Eagles, the Indianapolis Colts, Hoagland Elementary School, where Timmy attended 3rd grade, and especially Timmy's physician Dr. Karen Evans.

May God's blessings be on everyone who sent food, visits, assistance, flowers, cards, memorial donations and your special support during our loss.

*Jackie Ladig-Carter  
Timothy Ladig-Carter Family  
Woodburn*

## This fix won't save Social Security

The president is promoting personal accounts as a way to reform Social Security. Keep three things in mind: There is no free lunch; you cannot get something from nothing; and if it sounds too good to be true, it most likely is. All three apply to every proposal to reform Social Security. Social Security has \$1.355 trillion in the bank, but after taking into account future taxes, needs \$13.2 trillion now to pay full, promised benefits! How does splitting the current cash flow into two piles change anything?

The current benefit formula adjusts previous years' wages by the change in the U.S. Average Wage Growth, but now would be adjusted by inflation. The formula would average 40 years' instead of 35 years' work history. Had these changes been enacted for those retiring in 2003, their benefits would be about 20 percent less.

Personal accounts allow a worker to divert a percentage of his Social Security taxes to a personal account. In exchange, the value of the diverted tax dollars plus interest would be subtracted from already reduced Social Security benefit. This is referred to as the "offset" condition.

The only way payable benefits can equal promised

benefits is for the assets of the trust fund and personal accounts to total \$13.2 trillion now. Don't fall for an old con. There is no painless solution.

*William Larsen  
Republican Primary Candidate  
District 3 U.S. Representative*

## Mediation can help any couple

I was pleased you picked up the wire report from Jeffersonville and carried the article (March 16) about the minimal increase in filing fees for divorce to cover the mediation costs for low-income people.

Volunteering as a mediator in Allen County's pilot mediation program for the past several years, I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of the courts' Free Mediation Day. Along with the financial savings to the county and to couples and reducing waiting time in the courts, there are several other benefits of a mediated settlement for any couple — not just low-income couples — determined to pursue a divorce.

Mediation focuses the divorcing parents on giving special attention to the welfare of their children (if any). Keeping the interests of the children at the forefront channels the couple to work for parenting arrangements that serve the needs of children first. It reminds the couple that the marriage may end, but their parenting responsibilities do not.

Mediation enhances the personal integrity of the parties by empowering them to fashion a settlement that meets their best interests rather than one imposed by a judge after a bitter legal battle. It helps them concentrate on what will be of lasting importance in the future. And, in the future, they can use these skills for disputes that are sure to arise.

There are other benefits for anyone wishing to use mediation for re-negotiating parenting disputes, non-married custody issues, eldercare and family disputes, but that's an article for another time.

Using mediation benefits persons of all socioeconomic levels in a variety of conflict situations.

*Michael Rosswurm  
New Haven*

## This week's question

Should a Fort Wayne substitute teacher be punished for showing "The Passion of the Christ" to a classroom?

Phone 423-4646 to answer yes or 423-4793 to answer no by 8 a.m. Monday, or go to [www.news-sentinel.com](http://www.news-sentinel.com)