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—Contributor.....Hank Lange
—Contributor email.....personalbest1@yahoo.com
—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers
—Format.....LETTERS - Opinions - Letters to the Editor
—Dateline.....Brattleboro
—Article Number:.....43696



Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Happy's fate as a metaphor for the GOP

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3 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

4 Happy, the elephant, died on May 26 at the Bronx Zoo.

5 That same day, Ken Paxton, endorsed by President Trump,
6 defeated Texas Senator John Cornyn in the Republican party
7 primary by an overwhelming margin (28 points!).

8 Cornyn is a longstanding member of the Grand Old
9 Party, a Bush-era Republican. He has held his seat for 23 years,
10 served as Republican whip for six of them, and is known for his
11 bipartisan deal-making.

12 Like the GOP of old, also suffering from liver and kidney
13 failure, Happy was put down by zoo officials after a long period
14 of senescence. Once an elephant of grand stature and
15 uncommon intelligence, Happy was named for the character in
16 the fairy tale of Snow White while coming of age in a Florida
17 petting zoo. She found no sanctuary there or in the Bronx Zoo,
18 where she resided since 1977.

19 There, in the 1980s, Happy, with a parade of partners,
20 was trained to do tricks, give children rides, and perform in
21 shows known as Elephant Weekends. Her intelligence opened
22 the cage of captivity to assertions of her right to liberty in a New
23 York Court of Appeals case in 2022 in a controversial decision to
24 keep her in the zoo.

25 I visited the Bronx Zoo as a 10-year-old with my family,
26 before Happy's days. My impressionistic memory is of watching
27 two giant pachyderms, in a cavern of concrete, eliminate honey-
28 dew-melon-size plops of dung from high and then being startled
29 by the thunderous thud as the droppings hit the floor
30 resoundingly.

31 Now, many decades later, I am astounded once again.
32 Petting zoo officials, attempting to perpetuate the evil Queen's
33 part of a Snow White fairy tale, have looked into the mirror on
34 the wall, and in a horribly distorted reflection of fairest of all,
35 have chosen Paxton as the superior candidate to represent Texas
36 on the Senate floor.

37 If one looks and listens, like a wide-eyed, keen-sensing
38 10-year-old, one should be shocked by the dung being flung. The
39 poison apple of amoral character and conduct that Paxton could
40 be a poster boy for, infests what remains of the necrotic Happy
41 parade and further infects the Grand Old Party with maggots.

42 Happy's life was ruled by controversy over animal and
43 human rights. It's time to right the wrongs, with moral clarity and
44 conviction. In common cause, we can expose the despicable
45 conduct of high officials and evict those foisting poisoned apples
46 upon us.

47 If we see it for what it is, and only support and vote for
48 elected officials of high integrity and moral sense, happier days
49 will be back again.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

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LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

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LINKS:

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VIDEO:

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LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

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