

comment gives taxpayers to voice their opinions, ask and let their elected officials t's what, er, in a room of shouting, no yard. sidents and elected officials one another, it makes it im- or any single person to make . It also makes it impossible ter to accurately take down

e someone who believes in m of speech and freedom of I'm guessing you also be- riers should hold people ac- by recording what they said t draft of history, AKA the stand people sometimes get and frustrated that it feels e to keep quiet any longer, t's Rules of Order are in a reason. If all people do is r one another, elected offi- dn't be able to accomplish luring their meetings, which hurts every taxpayer. enny for your thoughts.

yzes get sick often so when I do, I all prepared for it. In't even consider what I igh this week as being sick. or snuffles. neezing uncontrollably and as running like a faucet. d out of my chair and ran for bicle.

s a mom to four, I thought have tissues. There were in Holly's cubicle (that I re was not even there to di-

as covering Law Day cer- I did not expect her to lead my nose, I just turned to her tion.

in into the bathroom to find paper-type cloth to blow my

ay have worked when I was ut my cubicle now has a box

women think men exagger- ve get sick. It's not that. We rely suffering twice as much re have no idea how to take rselves.

tin n accused of being a squirrel of sorts, thanks to a handful shy-tailed rodents who hap- e up the cracked corn I regu- ide. The aging maple tree in ard is ideal cover, and the e squirrels are frequent vis- cking out their antics from in a back window is cheap

Jim Hale



take cover.

When descending, the squirrel carefully picks his path until he's a few feet from the ground, then goes for broke and takes a leap of faith into the grass.

I'm not sure how long he'll call the ledge home sweet home, but I'll have fun keeping tabs on our new neighbor while he's there.

Holly Fletcher

It's nice to know I was missed (see Alex's entry), even if only for my tissues.

By the way, the tissues are located on the filing cabinet - right next to the candy dish and the antibacterial hand sanitizer. I also have Advil, Band-aids, a nail file, Lysol wipes, and eye drops.

It seems I have become the mom of the newsroom.

It's a fact that Mary Grace is the same age as my oldest child, but I am still younger than Jim.

Then again, Jim's cubicle is as messy as a teen's bedroom and it takes willpower on my part to keep from cleaning it. *Mom note: Clutter may be a sign of genius, but cleanliness is next to godliness.*

Even Harry is younger than me, but he yells louder. Somebody (not me) should tell Harry that people tend to remember words spoken in a neutral tone better than those being relayed in a harsh tone of voice.

I do not mind growing older but am concerned about getting shorter.

The doc says I've lost nearly an inch in height over the last two years. That's ridiculous! Where does it go?

My kids already chuckle to see me climbing the cupboards like Mount Everest just to get a bag of chips.

Guess I'll have to start gnawing on their kneecaps to get their attention.

Co-workers, be warned!

Vanessa Pellechio

This weekend I get to celebrate one of my best friends. It's her bridal shower today (the first I'm ever helping host.) I met Vicky when we worked together at Target during college breaks.

We had the same work schedule and became inseparable after work. Our friendship has always been easy from the beginning since we both enjoy shopping - a little too much. I'm

out when I was single. I always called them "mom" and "dad" as a joke at the dinner table. Now, all four of us have fun together. Vicky is such a giving person, and I'm hoping today feels special for her. She deserves the best!

Jim Hale

It was a new experience for my colleague this week, but one I've endured too many times.

When people try to tell you how to write your story, they're asking you to behave unethically. Whether they realize it or not, what they really want is for you to slant your story to match their opinions.

That's the opposite of a reporter's job. We strive to be as neutral as humanly possible because we work for the entire community, not just one faction or another.

If anything, the many reporters I've known over the years are slightly biased against their own personal opinions, subjecting anything they personally favor to extra skepticism to make sure their stories aren't advocating for it.

So, when somebody yells at me to include this or that, I let their words roll off me and judge what to write by the same standards as always: accuracy and even-handedness. My goal is to be fair to everyone.

Sometimes, people go one step further and say something like "Make sure you write what really happened."

Well, duh. My commitment to ethical journalism aside, I'd like to keep my job and I'd like for people to subscribe to the newspaper. Lying isn't going to accomplish either of those goals.

As for the insulting implication that I can't or won't do my job, well, after doing this kind of work since 1981, my skin is pretty thick. I'm pretty much wearing a bullet-proof vest.

I wonder how people who yell at reporters deal with other professionals. When they have a leaky pipe in their basement, do they ask the plumber if he or she knows how to hold a wrench?

I get that powerful people have been maligning the media for decades now. Of course there are bad apples, and the culture of TV news especially is often troubling.

But, beyond those things, think about why powerful people would relentlessly undermine the press. Think about why they would encourage everyone to believe reporters are biased liars. Could it be that the ruling class doesn't want anybody questioning them? Could it be that the powerful want people to think of them as the only trustworthy source of information?