

## OUR VIEW

## In With The New

A high school in West Las Vegas seems like a practical idea to us and to many in this community.

West Las Vegas is home to a handful of elementary schools and a middle school that opened in the late 1990s. West-Edison Academy, a middle school, was the first campus built in the area in more than 30 years. Now why not complete the education continuum\* by building a neighborhood high school for those elementary and middle school pupils to attend?

Sensible, right, if this is not a practical idea. Well, let's just say it's likely no one will ever accuse the Clark County School District of being a bastion of educational sensibility. Then there's the fact that the CCSD, which is 54 percent minority, is a so-called "majority minority district." If majority rules, as is generally the custom, then shouldn't the majority's needs be met, especially in as non-controversial a matter as this.

Northwest residents near Gilcrease Orchards are fighting plans for a new school, saying they fear of the onslaught of traffic, graffiti and animal-hating youth. West Las Vegas clamors for a campus.

West Las Vegas not only needs a high school but deserves one and for several reasons. The argument that a community-based education will benefit students, parents and by extension the academically struggling and cash-strapped school district itself is a good one. This is much like the term "continuum of care" often referred to in the medical field. This alludes to infrastructures and services put in place to deal with a medical malady from treatment to post-treatment and, in certain circumstances, to cure or death.

West Las Vegas' educational apparatus would be greatly enhanced by a high school. Our View is it would be the final piece necessary for completion of the community's secondary education puzzle.

Immediate benefits would include increased neighborhood pride, interest from all facets of the community from businesses to government to nonprofits. High school campuses are excellent recruiting grounds and more campuses are offering advanced-level courses and specialty vocational, academic and extracurricular programs. Most importantly, there would be heightened interest and activity among parents.

As is, with schools away from the neighborhood, many parents struggle with being active participants in their child's experience. Many of their children are bused across town to Cheyenne, Cimarron-Memorial, Mojave, Palo Verde, Rancho and Western high. Commute time range from 15 minutes to more than an hour in an attempt to pepper campuses with a diverse mix. This makes it difficult for parents to get involved in the PTA, support after-school activities or attend extracurricular and sports events.

Often the twin effects are disconnected parents and dejected students. Diversity comes with a cost. School officials say diversity is high among CCSD's criteria for determining attendance boundaries. In the 1970s, the district was under a federal order to desegregate Clark County schools via busing. That order has since expired.

Tired of demands falling on deaf ears, activists are taking charge and taking their message to the people. Members of the Westside Action Alliance Korps-Uplifting People (WAAK-UP) have swayed the board of trustees to meet at 6 p.m. Tuesday at Kit Carson Elementary School, 1735 "D" St. Discussion of a high school in West Las Vegas is part of the agenda.

School officials say they've been unable to find enough land for the right price. WAAK-UP leader Marzette Lewis suggests building a six-story building, promulgating the multistory school concept inaugurated by Wendell P. Williams Elementary in West Las Vegas and Hollingsworth Elementary downtown. Our View is clear. Something needs to happen.

As Lewis recently told the Las Vegas Sun: "The only thing I want to hear anybody say is 'We're building your kids a high school.' Elementary school, middle school and high school. We want our kids to leave together and come back together. We've waited long enough, paid taxes long enough. It's our turn."

## POINT OF VIEW



## 'Three times, I told you so' Say so long to your freedoms

By Louie Overstreet  
Sentinel-Voice

As stated in the past, I am blessed with one of the best I told you so moves in the business.

I had no idea, however, that I would get a chance to lay this fact — told you so (TYS) — on you three times in the same year. Man, my critics are going to have a fit over the fact that I have been right at least three times in the same year.

On Feb. 6, there was TYS I. Lightning struck again on Aug. 14 with TYS II. I wrote that the Patriot Act was going to cause major erosions of personal freedoms Americans heretofore enjoyed based on guarantees in the U.S. Constitution.

Last February, I half jokingly, but in all seriousness, suggested that the Patriot Act was the mean, freedom-robbing "big brother" of racial profiling in Nevada. In August, I pulled your coat to the fact that the Attorney General of the United States was attempting to get the Patriot Act amended to make it even more oppressive. I even suggested that you consider getting in touch with the state's congressional delegation. I suggest you express your concern for the existing oppressive provisions of the Patriot Act and proposed harsher draconian amendments.

Since I am called so many names, along about now, I don't know if you are calling me a procrastinator or a prognosticator. Whatever name



LOUIE OVERSTREET

you are calling me — perhaps, "Old TYS" — is certain of the fact that the Patriot Act is designed to subliminally erode our privacy rights by capitalizing on our fears.

There is no way this Patriot Act could have passed in the absence of the 9/11. It was passed solely on the basis that it was legislation needed to fight terrorism and not, however, for the purpose of dealing with run-of-the-mill political corruption.

This Patriot Act was used to go after some allegedly crooked local politicians who seemingly have exhibited some bad behavior. Whether or not the indictments of former Clark County Commissioners Lance Malone and Dario Herrera and current chair Mary Kincaid-Chauncey lead to convictions, there is blatant unfairness. Regardless of what you personally think of these individuals, I doubt if anyone believes them to be terrorists. Yet provisions of the Patriot Act were used to tap telephones and search financial records that resulted in charges of political influence

peddling.

The glee I am deriving is tempered by what is going to be the long-term impact of the Patriot Act on our personal freedoms. Though I could boast, I am also tempered by the reality of seeing elected persons who voted for the Patriot Act and belatedly the hypercritical white media questioning how the Patriot Act is being used to go after everyday Americans.

One of the persons who voted for the Patriot Act is a very decent person and good senator. Harry Reid was quoted in the paper saying, "Congress intended the (Patriot) Act to help federal authorities root out threats from terrorists and spies after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. The law was intended for activities related to terrorism and not to go after naked women. Let me say, with (Michael) Galardi and his whole gang, I don't condone, appreciate nor support all their nakedness. But having said that, I haven't heard anyone say at any time he was involved with terror-

ism."

The Review-Journal, remember them for the 41 articles in 21 days about a black politician using the earned-employee benefit of sick leave to serve the public while up in Carson City? Well, here's the paper's editorial position:

"Sure enough, a mere two years after its enactment, use of the Patriot Act, in a case as far from '9/11' terrorism as the Galardi topless bar probe, proves skeptics were right."

Also, the Las Vegas Sun editors even took time out from their merciless attacks on our most effective black state politician to raise concern for now how the Patriot Act is being used. That holier-than-thou crowd stated: "The Patriot Act should be strictly limited to investigating suspected terrorist plots." They even had to throw your boy and others like me a bone by going on to state: "The news that the FBI has used powers granted in the Patriot Act to investigate political

(See Overstreet, Page 12)

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