



Animals, animals, animals

TOXEY -- Students in Mrs. Cooper's 6th grade class at South Choctaw Academy recently completed research projects on different types of animals during a study of vertebrates and invertebrates. As part of their project, they created animals of every kind out of materials such as clay, sticks, paper clips, foam, and even brought in a live animal or two! The students gave oral reports about their studies. Pictured ABOVE: (Kneeling, left to right) Hannah Jackson, Holden Johnson, Chase Sikes; (back) Timothy Watson, Patton Carney, Nikki McIlwain, Taylor Gibson, and Sheldon Gourgues.

Choctaw Sun photos by Dee Ann Campbell
Pictured above are: Brittany Ford, Lauren Lovette, Bree Copeland, Teresa Boykin; (Back) Jordan Tew and Mason Bonner.

The true definition of American freedom

By Clara DuBose
2nd place, Ala. VFW Voice of Democracy Contest

I believe the challenges to Freedom are tied up in its definition, the way we interpret it. Other world powers don't see freedom the way we in America see it. Their history has yielded a slightly different definition.

Terrorist groups don't have the same definition as Americans.

And extremist groups who use our freedoms against us obviously don't have the same definition.

America is not trying to force its definition of freedom on the rest of the world, but is trying to find common ground. And that is a challenge.

Part of the challenge is apathy. Individuals today are so far removed from the battles that won freedom in the first place, so comfortable, that they are easily influenced by those groups who would plant disrespect and foolishness in their minds. They don't go back to the source papers and read the truth; they accept one-sided arguments too readily.

To understand freedom you have to value it. You have to hold in high regard the truth that some things are worth fighting for, and you have to value and respect those in our past who have fought, that we might have freedom. We honor those persons best by cherishing and holding on to freedom - by fighting again, if necessary - and not by being weak-willed when freedoms are challenged. I think freedom can be understood by looking at its opposite - the states of bondage, slavery, and restraint. Any threat that would revert to those states is a challenge to freedom.

Freedom is not something that any one person can give or take away. No one should be granted more freedom than another. In America our freedom is spelled out in the constitution of the United States, and we have our Supreme Court to see to it that the constitution is interpreted correctly.

America's definition of freedom is worth using as a model because America is known as the "Home of the Free." In its over two-hundred-year history, America has stood as a symbol of freedom for all the people of the world. Very early, Americans realized that freedom is not something one can hoard, or deny to others. It is meant to be offered to all, shared equally by all. All of this is a definition we wish others would accept.

It is certain that freedom is not FREE. We have our military that have faithfully defended our freedom from aggression, and the debt of gratitude that we owe to them can never be fully paid. Americans have fought many battles within our nation and abroad for the cause of freedom. The desire to see our brothers of other nations liberated has caused us to go into harm's way many times because freedom's obligation is to do everything possible to spread and perpetuate freedom.

America has always seen itself as a light to other nations in an effort to carry freedom to every dark place. This includes freedom to choose items in a free market, to hold employment that gives means to afford decent housing, education, family integrity, freedom from disease and suffering, illiteracy, starvation, and oppressive political regimes, to just name a few. There are regimes in this world who do not want this concept of freedom. America is hated by them because they do not want the people enlightened. They wish to hold all the power to themselves.

Freedom requires effort. It requires devotion to the cause of eradicating bondage. When all the nations of the world unite in a common definition of freedom, there will be an end to selfishness and a new desire for openness and sharing. That makes me sure that Freedom's Challenge is a common definition. The challenge is to get people of different ideologies and cultures to come to an agreement on a definition of freedom so that all will support freedom openly and universally.

I believe that is why Americans have gone into oppressed countries of the world and helped them form democracies. Having so great a freedom, Americans must not become fearful and silent people who lack the courage to hold on to freedom. Americans must be willing to go where they call us from the corners of the earth and help the oppressed establish freedoms.

Freedom's challenge is its definition. Freedom, the most desired concept in the mind of man, must be universally defined, valued, shared, and perpetuated. All these are part of the challenge to freedom. Once men know freedom, they must know its obligations. It must be so burned into the hearts of men that they make it their mission to pass it on to the generations to come.



Pictured with their 'animals' are: Landrum Roberts, Annie Kelley, Alex Boney (yes, that's a REAL snake); (Back) J.J. Jenkins, Chesley Bowerman, Madison Covington, and Bradley Clark.

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Dubose wins Voice of Democracy contest

JACKSON -- Clara DuBose won second place statewide in the Veterans of Foreign Wars 2006 Voice of Democracy Contest. She also won at the local and district levels in 2005.

Clara is the 18-year old daughter of Circuit Judge and Mrs. Stuart (Allison) DuBose, of Jackson. She is a senior at Jackson Academy where she is enrolled in advanced classes, serves as the president of her senior class, as a co-head cheerleader, and Pine City Ambassador.

She is the granddaughter of Clarke County Commissioner Patricia DuBose.

(ED. NOTE: The Choctaw Sun salutes this young lady for this excellent thesis. The essay is printed at right.)

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