

Did you know?

Forget golf or the power lunch. The "in" business outing of the '90s is duck hunting, the Wall Street Journal reports.

Schoolkids get gentle lessons that manners really matter

By JUDITH HAYNES

Newport News Daily Press

You're at a party and you're introduced to two young children. One of them looks you in the eye, says, "How do you do?" and shakes your hand.

The other one stares at the floor and mumbles something. Which child has made the better impression?

Almost everybody would say Child No. 1. Whether you call that child's behavior "good manners" or "social skills," most of us know that such things can make a difference in life.

To supplement — or supplant — behavior learned at home, some educators are making special efforts for their pupils. At Rappahannock Central Elementary School in Middlesex County, Va., students focus on one social skill a week. Principal Kathy Krom asked teachers to suggest skills that need to be worked on, then had teachers vote to establish the top suggestions.

■ Say "Please." "Thank you" and "You're welcome."

■ Say "Excuse me." "Pardon me" and "I'm sorry."

At Seaford Elementary in York County, Va., Principal Betsy DeRousse says pupils have been working on one "life skill" a week since the beginning of the school year.

A list of social and life skills See page 5E

The Seaford skills seem to lean more toward character traits than manners, but there is a lot more overlap than first appears.

For example, DeRousse says, calling someone ugly would be bad manners. But it would also be a violation of the skill "Friendship: To make and keep a friend through mutual trust and caring."

Thoughtless name-calling could also violate "Sense of Humor: To laugh and be playful without hurting others."

Both principals expect parents and all school employees to be involved in the lessons. One mother, DeRousse says, was sorely tried on the skill "Patience when her child was practicing Perseverance." "If she tells me to persevere one more time..." the mother said, but at that point she was still holding on to her Sense of Humor. The lessons are incorporated into all activities, not taught as an isolated subject. The rewards are recognition and praise.

Students at Seaford are asked to think of examples of the skill of the week, and their ideas are read over the public address system.

"Arrion Dennis and Rebecca Ledebuhr think Integrity means that if the person in front of you drops their keys and you give them back to the person instead of slipping them into your pocket, that's good integrity."

"Really, overall, our kids are pretty well-behaved," Krom says. "We're not starting at ground zero."

Families spend less time together than they did a generation or two ago. There's less opportunity for practicing, for example, polite conversation and table manners during a family dinner hour — skills that will help a young person enter the business world.

Students at Seaford hear the skill of the week "five days a week, in physical education, in music, in art, in the classroom, in the cafeteria," DeRousse says.

Social graces are discussed with students "on an ongoing basis and an as-needed basis" in Isle of Wight County, Va., says curriculum coordinator Robert Driscoll.

"Manners are a civil way of living and working and having fun with each other. ... It's teaching civility."

It doesn't do any good, he says, to stand up and lecture children about the concepts of social skills.

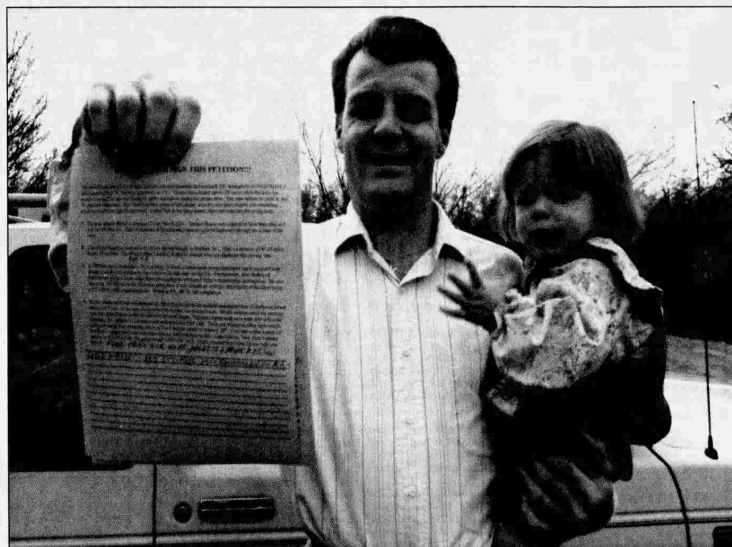
Parents and teachers must be good examples. "You don't say, 'These are 10 ways to be a successful adult.' You show them. This is the way a successful adult behaves."

"You teach social skills day in and day out, by everything you do and say. ... You inculcate by word and deed. Never let up. That's why parents' jobs are so important."

Living

For 30 years, Richard Wetzel has been crusading to get his brother out of prison. He says he'll do whatever it takes.

A MAN OBSESSED



Richard Wetzel of Fort Mill has spent 30 years trying to clear his brother Frank of the murders of two N.C. Highway Patrol troopers. Frank Wetzel is up for parole on Saturday.

By MARK PRICE

Staff Writer

Richard Wetzel is short on memories of the most notorious cop killer east of the Mississippi, and he feels a little cheated.

He was only 2 when Frank Edward Wetzel, his 36-year-old half-brother, shot two N.C. Highway Patrol troopers in Lee and Richmond counties and left them dying in the road.

The manhunt, the trials and the funerals were over before he was 3.

Richard Wetzel remembers nothing, yet still can't forget. For nearly 30 years, he has pored over the case, memorizing every detail, and claims no one ever proved that his brother killed troopers W.L. Reece and James T. Brown, 48 miles apart on Nov. 5, 1957.

No matter that nearly everyone else disagrees, and more than a few people are afraid of Wetzel for such tactics as threatening witnesses and staking out President Clinton's travel route during a visit to Charlotte in 1996.

At 41, Richard Wetzel of Fort Mill is a man obsessed, and he'll do whatever it takes to get his 75-year-old brother exonerated for a 39-year-old crime. Even if it takes going to the president.

"I do scare the hell out of a lot of people, particularly those who are hiding behind this stuff. They need to be afraid," says Wetzel, with a clipped laugh that has little to do with humor.

"Even if he dies in prison, the truth will still be there, and I won't let that die. If something happens to me, that young 'un of mine is going to take up where I left off. She'll know about this from the time she is able to walk. Some of the first sentences she utters will be: 'My uncle Frank is in prison and he didn't do it.'"

His daughter, Lacey, is only 21 months old, but daddy is going to teach her just like his daddy taught him. Richard Wetzel was 10 when relatives dressed him up in church clothes and sent him off to beg a Charlotte attorney for free help on an appeal.

"Mr. Bailey, will you please help my brother? We don't think he's guilty, and we don't have no money."

The attorney didn't bite, even after the boy offered to share profits from the story rights.

But Wetzel was just getting warmed up. Thirty years later — even with the responsibilities of a

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Frank Wetzel (at right in a 1958 photo) has been in prison for 39 years. The newspaper clippings reflect countless attempts by him to get out of prison for crimes he says he didn't commit.

Policeman Killer
Wetzel Wants Out

Image guru: Women still don't get it

By ANGELA SHANNON

Fashion Writer

A number of changes have occurred in the 20 years since image consultant John Molloy wrote "The Woman's Dress for Success Book." He convinced many businesswomen that the key to increasing their earning power lay in wearing suits that imitated the colors and basic design of a man's suit.

Thus, the "power suit" was born: dark, tailored suits with a white blouse and dark pumps. It became a cliché description of the late 1970s career woman's wardrobe as women moved into corporate glass offices.

Now Molloy has written "New Women's Dress for Success" (Warner Books, \$12.99), updated and revised for the 1990s. He recognizes that several changes have affected the dress of career women.

"The most fundamental change is that the concept of dressing for success has been almost universally accepted," the author says. "Today the debate is not over whether women should dress for success, but how they should go about doing it."

Jane McWhorter, president of the Charlotte chapter of Executive Women International, agrees his advice is on target for women in the Carolinas.

SHARE YOUR PEEVES

You've heard me gripe about my fashion pet peeves: dress-down Fridays and women wearing athletic shoes with dresses, for example. Now I'd like to hear about yours. Tell me about fashion mistakes, trends or habits that really get your goat. I'll share your comments in a later article.

Call me at 358-5086, anytime, send a fax to 358-5036 or write to me at The Charlotte Observer, P.O. Box 30308, Charlotte, NC 28230-0308.

And she recalls her embrace of the power suit concept.

"I went through that phase in the late '70s," says McWhorter, 52. "I think, probably, in theory, it helped women get to the point where they are today where women are freer to wear what they want. I think we can look more feminine now."

As women have made substantial gains in the professional work force, jacket outfits have replaced the power

suit as a woman's work uniform. Executive women no longer feel the need to imitate their male counterparts to succeed.

The biggest competition most women face in the 1990s is from other women, says Molloy.

"Today corporations can find dozens of qualified women without any problems," he says. "That is one of the reasons dressing for success has again become an important topic."

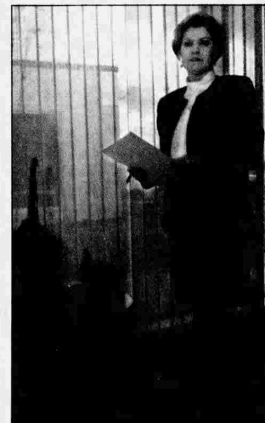
Because so many corporations now allow casual attire, women have more options for business attire. That means they also have more chances to make mistakes, says Molloy.

McWhorter, executive secretary to the president of Cummins Atlantic Inc., a southeast distributor for Cummins diesel engines, always wears suits to work, despite the fact her company allows casual dressing from Tuesday through Friday.

"I think we behave more professionally when we look more professional," she says. "I'm more comfortable wearing a skirt to work because that's the way I was brought up."

Molloy might say McWhorter is an exception.

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CHRISTOPHER A. RECORD/Staff

"I think we can look more feminine now," says Jane McWhorter, president of the Charlotte chapter of Executive Women International.