

MEDIATE THIS !

THE TWO-BEDROOM APARTMENT AND THE OLIVE BRANCH

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

Dear Mediator,

After living with my roommate and his girlfriend for the past three years, I'm moving out on my own. They found another roommate and are now looking for a new place. I found a two-bedroom apartment I absolutely love. I applied and got approved to move in. Why not have an extra room if I can afford it? I found out that my roommates submitted a rental application for the same apartment I'm moving into. Apparently, they love it too. They now feel I should rescind my application so they can apply, because I don't need two bedrooms and they had put their hopes on getting this place. I think I have no obligation to do this for them. Am I wrong?

Rattled in Olay Ranch

Dear Rattled,

We deal with a lot of roommate issues at the National Conflict Resolution Center. From dirty dishes piling up, to loud music, to pet hair, we've



GETTY IMAGES

This week's question deals with a roommate who hopes solely to rent a new apartment, only to find the other roommates have applied for the same unit.

seen it all. Roommate conflicts are an unfortunate reality of life. When you have different personalities in close spaces, there will always be friction. Your situation is quite unique, however. You've presumably had a good relation-

ship with your roommates, having lived with them for the past three years, only to find yourself in conflict as you are about to leave.

Withdrawing your application to allow your roommates to apply will not help anyone. There is no guaran-

tee that their application will be approved simply because you are no longer an applicant, and there is no guarantee you will find another apartment that will give you the same sense of joy. Nevertheless, your roommates being upset at

the fact that they didn't get the apartment is understandable. We've all been apartment hunting or product searching at one point only to find a perfect match, then be outbid or beaten to the transaction by someone else. Perhaps what is not understandable is why they are exhibiting this hostility toward you.

If you value their friendship and want to preserve your relationship with them, then this could be a perfect opportunity to utilize conciliatory gestures in your conflict resolution strategy. Conciliatory gestures encompass any action taken that aims to ease the suffering caused by being in conflict with someone. Acknowledging the unfortunate circumstance is a good first step. You could offer to help your roommates search for an alternative apartment, or even ask the property manager of your new apartment if there are similar options available.

Perhaps you can offer to help them move or bring them lunch when they are first settling into their new

place. Whatever you decide to do, these conciliatory gestures will serve not only to communicate to them that it is important to you to preserve your relationship, but also to show them that you actually mean what you say.

The preservation of our relationships with those around us can be trying at times. Sometimes all it takes is an olive branch, through an act of goodwill, to soften a hardened viewpoint. American military officer and statesman Lewis Cass once said, "People may doubt what you say, but they will believe what you do." Never forget the strength of the positive tide you can create with an act of conciliation.

Steven P. Dinkin is a professional mediator who has served as president of the San Diego-based National Conflict Resolution Center since 2003. Do you have a conflict that needs a resolution? Share your story with The Mediator via email at mediateatthis@ncrconline.com or as an online submission by visiting www.ncrconline.com/MediateThis. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

NOTEBOOKS

From Union-Tribune reporting staff



COURTESY SDG&E

SDG&E has a new tactical command vehicle that will be deployed during wildfires to help improve communications and provide more information.

PUBLIC SAFETY: KAREN KUCHER

SDG&E's \$600K firefighting vehicle

San Diego Gas & Electric plans to deploy a special off-road vehicle during wildfires that can quickly provide firefighters with state-of-the-art communications technology, even in remote areas.

The \$600,000 tactical command vehicle, which the utility company bought in November 2018, is a truck loaded with gear — satellite and microwave dishes, equipment that can downlink helicopter video and a table top touchscreen where maps and video can be viewed.

"The vehicle is vital to SDG&E's safety efforts because it allows teams to deploy faster and quickly establish full internet and satellite phone communications at temporary locations," the company said in a statement.

The unit, which can carry up to four people, will be manned by SDG&E employees and may be partially staffed by fire command staff. It was among the firefighting assets paid for by the utility, including a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, highlighted at a press conference last week.

Since 2007, SDG&E has invested about \$1.5 billion of ratepayer money into programs aimed at reducing the risk of wildfires and helping put out fires once they ignite.

"This resource allows for on-site command and control at disasters or significant emergencies," said utility spokeswoman Denice Menard. "Through the use of sophisticated communication technology, key decision-makers have all the tools necessary to make safe and informed decisions."

The vehicle can be deployed within about 20 minutes when a fire breaks out, she said, and can go into high-clearance areas and off pavement. It will be stored at San Diego International Airport.

It can establish internet and satellite phone communications in remote sites and "should enhance situational awareness and give additional intelligence resources to incident commanders," she said.

karen.kucher@sduuniontribune.com

THE READERS' REPRESENTATIVE: ADRIAN VORE

What is the U-T 'Editorial Board'?

Reader sensitivity to White House stories and reader perception of the news and editorial departments have been ongoing issues for the past two years during these times of deep political division.

Take for example, a reader who emailed to complain recently about the juxtaposition on the front page between an article on the Trump administration defending the president's tweets attacking four representatives and another story on the psychology of hate seen in white supremacy and political extremism.

The reader said the articles being played next to each other was done purposely to link the administration to hate. He said it showed that the "editorial board" had exerted its influence on story play.

(This was not the case. The front page follows a consistent format of a large picture and a story above the fold. Others stories, and a smaller picture, end up below the fold. It just so happened that on A1 that day, the two stories landed next to each other below the fold.)

The reader's reference to the "editorial board" made me wonder how many readers know what is the editorial board and what it does.

In short, the editorial board deals with editorials and other opinion pieces. It operates separately from the newsroom. Editors on the board do not influence news decisions — and newsroom editors do not shape editorials.

For instance, in April the editorial board took the position that it would no longer print the names of mass shooters. "Our (editorial) board will no longer publish these perpetrators' names in our editorials except in rare circumstances when we deem the news value too great to avoid doing it once," the editorial announcing the policy read.

The policy affected opinion pieces, not news stories.

For a description of the editorial board and its function, I went to Matthew T. Hall, the editorial and opinion director.

"The San Diego Union-Tribune Editorial Board is a group of journalists at the Union-Tribune that regularly weigh in with a collective voice on issues of the day and with a number of endorsements during political campaigns, after interviewing candidates and researching the issues," Hall said.

"If our news coverage is the heart of the U-T, the opinion section is its soul, as my

predecessor, Bill Osborne, used to say. It's where we try to shape our region's future through debate and commentary, independent of any political party, valuing the diversity of the region and trying to hold institutions and their leaders to high standards of honesty, transparency and accountability.

"The board has five members: Jeff Light, editor and publisher; Andrew Kleske, reader outreach editor; Blanca Gonzalez, community opinion editor; Chris Reed, deputy opinion editor; and me, the editorial and opinion director.

"The bulk of our discussions occur without Jeff, as we meet as a quartet every morning, along with community opinion writer and podcast host Abby Hamblin, to talk about which editorial subjects we'll tackle in the next day's paper (and within hours online) and what to say about these subjects," Hall said.

"Editorial writing involves researching and thinking deeply about a wide range of issues at every level of community, from local to international, and also conducting interviews as needed to be sure we understand these issues and their competing viewpoints as well as we can. The same process unfolds for candidate and ballot measure endorsements during political campaigns. And of course we publish other people's views to have a wider conversation around these issues, from letters to the editor to syndicated columns to op-eds of varying lengths.

"The board also interviews newsmakers and community leaders on a regular basis and under me has begun publishing not just transcripts of these interviews in the newspaper, but the entire audio and transcripts online. ... People can then judge more fully where the editorial board members are coming from. I and each of the editorial board members believe we should be as honest and transparent and accountable as we expect other community leaders to be.

"Speaking of ethics, the editorial board has no say in the Union-Tribune's news coverage, news stories or story placement. When we interview newsmakers, we will often invite reporters and editors from the newsroom to join us and ask questions, but we do not influence what they will then write, just as newsroom reporters and editors have zero say in what we editorialize on, or how. That division of duty is an important part of journalism, and something we at the U-T take seriously as we work for the public."

FROM THE ARCHIVES

35 YEARS SINCE THE BIG BASEBALL BRAWL

In 1984, 12 Padres, including Manager Dick Williams, and five Atlanta Braves were ejected from a game following a brawl that erupted in Atlanta after Braves' pitcher Pasqual Perez and the Padres' Graig Nettles were hit by pitches. Atlanta won the game 5-3. But the Padres went on to win the division, upset the Chicago Cubs in the NLCS and reached the World Series for the first time.

From The Tribune, Monday, Aug. 13, 1984:

INCENSED PADRES FIGHT BACK IN ATLANTA

No one hurt during brawls

By Barry Bloom, Tribune Sportswriter

From the moment Pascual Perez hit Alan Wiggins in the back with the first pitch of yesterday's game, one could sense trouble brewing in the humid Georgia air.

"That's the way Dick (Williams) does things," said Braves manager Joe Torre, following a game whose start was delayed 90 minutes by rain and before its conclusion featured two bench-clearing brawls and 14 ejections. "He did it that way in Montreal, and obviously he does it the same way now. But it's easy to make those kinds of decisions when you know you're not going to get hurt.

"It's easy to make those decisions when you're hiding behind a bunker. It got out of hand and I hold Dick responsible. He's an idiot with a capital I. I think he should be suspended for the rest of the year."

Williams' response? "You can tell Torre to

take that finger he's pointing and stick it."

How out of hand did it get? Not only did the Padres throw at Perez once when he came to bat, but three pitchers threw at Perez four times, six pitches in all.

Finally, in the eighth inning, reliever Craig Lefferts popped Perez in the left arm to start a melee that turned the Atlanta Stadium field into a huge wrestling mat in a 5-3 Padre loss that left San Diego 9½ games ahead of the Braves in the National League West.

"I don't like that kind of thing, but if they're going to hit our guys, they're going to have to pay the price," said Padres general manager Jack McKeon, who was watching events develop from the press box. "But it definitely got out of hand. Somebody could've gotten hurt and that would've



(bleeped) us up."

They were lucky. The Padres may have suffered various cuts and bruises, but otherwise, they went unscathed. No one, of course, knew what would happen in the eighth inning when the Braves' bench emptied with a charge toward Lefferts that was met by a San Diego counter surge.

Braves and Padres squared off all over the diamond in a constant barrage of pushing and shoving that was speckled by occasional punches.

To the Padres' dismay, Perez, who didn't come close to hitting another batter yesterday after plunking Wiggins, instantly took refuge in the Braves' dugout where he was protected by team trainer Dave Pursley.

Seeing Perez, Champ Summers made a beeline from the mound to the bench, where he was met by a shower of beer from the stands and by Braves' injured third baseman Bob Horner, who was standing there with his right wrist wrapped in a cast when he intercepted Summers.

Horner, the team captain who had been in the press box until the sixth inning, apparently was so upset by the situation he went down to the club's bench for one of the few times since the early-season injury.

HISTORICAL PHOTOS AND ARTICLES FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE ARCHIVES ARE COMPILED BY MERRIE MONTEAGUDO. SEARCH THE U-T HISTORIC ARCHIVES AT NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB.