

Irving Opinions

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common good. Kudos all around — and please, don't let up.

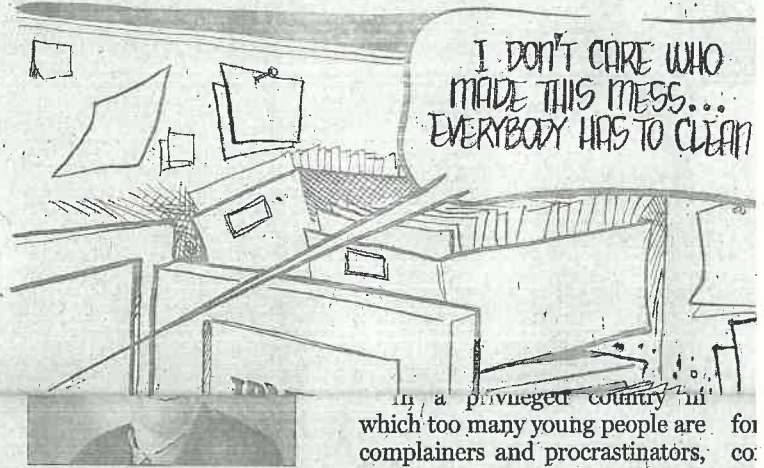
Thinking Small

Convention bureau is onto something good

The Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau is making smart moves in its push for more business. Rather than grieving over the City Council's decision to put plans for a new \$178 million convention center on hold, the bureau is targeting smaller groups.

The strategy is a clever one that could put Irving in a good place among North Texas cities battling for visitors' dollars. Many groups have become hesitant to book into the larger facilities during these tough economic times. They don't need the space and certainly don't need the costs. With 80 hotels, Irving offers convenience and ample space for smaller conventions and gatherings.

We commend the Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau for seeing an opportunity and moving quickly toward it.



ROD DREHER

No matter how fast-paced your life has been in the past couple of years, Jorge Hernandez probably has you beat.

In 2001, the Irving native graduated from Nimitz High School, married his high school sweetheart, joined the U.S. Army and became a father. This past April, Spc. Hernandez shipped out to Iraq to serve as a medic. He has since busied himself doing things like, oh, saving lives, having dinner with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and winning his regiment's Soldier of the Year award.

A number of 21-year-olds are still ambling around, either in or out of school, trying to figure out what to do with their lives, and waiting for the world to make good on the living they believe it owes them. Spc. Hernandez and wife

In a privileged country in which too many young people are complainers and procrastinators, the Hernandezes are believers and doers. It's humbling to think of how much they carry on their shoulders, and how gracefully they have risen to the challenge. Spc. Hernandez enlisted in the military on Sept. 9, 2001 — two days before the terrorist attacks that drew the United States into war. Nobody would have blamed the Hernandezes for cursing their rotten luck. But that's not what they did. Says Mrs. Hernandez, "After 9-11 happened, my husband was even more proud that he had enlisted. We really believe everything happens for a reason."
After Spc. Hernandez finished months of specialized training, he got his orders for Iraq in April. "I was very, very proud that he was going overseas," says his wife. "I refused to cry. I didn't want his last sight of me to be with mascara smeared and all that. We're very proud to be a military family."

...at current standings hold, that prob-
...in should it reach the postseason. If
...po-districts top Division II seed
...me probably lost its chance to gain the
...ped With the loss, MacArthur
...win out
...on "If we want to get in, we need to
...eg-team is in a four-way tie for third.
...Oct we knew that," said Beatty, whose