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I am saddened and frustrated (again) by the reports of another young person killed, here where we live - the Quad Cities. The latest victim is a 19-year-old girl from Davenport who was shot while sitting outside talking, minding her own business.

Like so many others, I, too, remember my family's complete emotional devastation when our loved one was killed in this senseless manner. And I am writing this letter, even as I feel somewhat helpless and at a loss for words. Can we stop this madness? Who are we to think that we can stop these tragic events that continue to occur, even as we plan and attempt to implement "programs" we hope will effect change? Are we fighting a losing battle? These are questions I have asked myself over the last 15 years. Some of you have found yourselves asking the same questions.

But we press on. We pray, we plan; we produce programs, events, and organizations. Because the one thing we know that drives us is the love for our children, our families, and our communities. That love continues to feed our faith, and we remain steadfast in our desire to reach out. We continue to pray and talk with our friends, neighbors, and colleagues, and this ignites the trust that is required to keep us believing that change can occur.

One of the places where prayer and conversation continue to take place is at Franklin Field on Ninth Street and 13th Avenue in Rock Island. Since April of this year, many of us have met every Sunday morning for the "Mothers Stand Against Violence" prayer vigil at 7 a.m. We have found comfort and courage through this demonstration of faith and trust, and will continue to meet indefinitely because we feel there is a need for community fellowship through

the power of prayer.

Once again, we invite all who can to join us on Sunday morning.

For further information call (563) 650-0354.

Shellie Moore Guy

Malin's Agreement Detrimental to the City

Permit me to offer a few comments pertaining to the controversy surrounding City Administrator Craig Malin's pay situation.

Late last year (December 1, 2005), with only a few days remaining in their terms, the mayor and city council, for reasons known only to them, approved a new employment agreement with the city administrator, which included an increase in his annual base salary of 14.45 percent, or, in dollar terms, $18,944 per year. In addition to this princely increase, according to news accounts, Mr. Malin granted himself cost-of-living increases without proper authorization.

Considering Mr. Malin's background, and the counsel provided him by the city's legal staff, it

seems he should be knowledgeable as to whether these actions were in accordance with his employment agreement and good management practices. It is curious that he has found it necessary to hire a private attorney for advice and counsel. It is also alarming that, according to the administrator's existing employment agreement, the City could become liable for the cost of this private attorney's services to Administrator Malin.

I have reviewed countless employment agreements and labor contracts during my lengthy career in personnel management and labor negotiations. In my opinion the existing agreement is extremely favorable to the administrator, and conversely detrimental to the city's taxpayers.

William G. McCarthy

Davenport

Down the Doughnut Hole

The Part D Medicare prescription-drug benefit is hardly a benefit for senior citizens. (See "Millions Will Soon Be in the Prescription-Drug-Coverage ‘Doughnut Hole,'" *River Cities' Reader*
Issue 595, August 22, 2006.)
Travesty
would be a more appropriate word. We would find Lewis Carroll's rabbit hole more congenial than Part D's doughnut hole.

AARP noted that "The federal government isn't likely to fund billions of dollars to

eliminate the gap. But popular demand for continuous coverage might persuade more of the private Part D plans to offer it as an option in future years."

After reading that statement, Adrienne Rich's words regarding her visionary anger that cleansed her sight came to mind. If visionary anger can cleanse one's sight, my sight is clean as a whistle.

Does the AARP crowd think that senior citizens have forgotten the significant role that the organization played in foisting this law, complete with that yawning doughnut hole, on us?

By the way, AARP is now supporting the health-courts initiative that would be a catastrophe for victims of medical malpractice. AARP members should contact William Novelli, AARP's CEO, and say, "Not this time, Mr. Novelli."

Jane Marshall

Dover, Tennessee