

Eastern Daily Press

SERVING THE COMMUNITY
SINCE 1870

Chance to reform gun laws to ensure some good comes from evil

The Sandy Hook massacre is full of violent and murderous detail. Yet it is a single moment in the aftermath of the attack which really encapsulates the deep ache all parents felt when hearing of the story. It involved a young police officer standing in the doorway of the room where distraught, hopeful parents were waiting for news. He uttered the single sentence, "I'm sorry, there are no more children".

Among those parents whose lives will have been all but destroyed were the mum and dad of Dylan Hockley, six, whose parents were married in Norwich and whose father went to the University of East Anglia.

We cannot imagine how they feel, but our hearts and thoughts go out to Ian and Nicole, along with the parents of the other seven boys and 12 girls and the families of the six adults gunned down by Adam Lanza.

The world is watching and waiting to see if America can act to prevent such massacres, which are all too common. If gun law reform was not high on the agenda during the presidential election, it must now be a top priority.

Mr Obama has the best chance of persuading the electorate of the need for change while the devastation poor gun control leads to is clear for the American people to see.

The president must be determined and steer, rather than push the country to tighter control; otherwise opponents of reform will easily caricature change as an attack on basic American freedom as has happened in the past. Better controls will not bring back lives lost at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Virginia Tech or Columbine. But they may at least show that the American people learnt something about their own society from these tragedies and were strong enough to put it right.

Thursford a true gem

Norfolk has many shining jewels in its glittering crown. There is the natural beauty from forests to Broads and coast to Brecks.

Add in the variety of architecture, the proud history and the rich culture and you have a recipe for a truly wonderful county.

At this very special time of the year, we can blend in to the mix the amazing Christmas spectacular staged at Thursford.

What John Cushing has created in the former farm buildings in the middle of rural North Norfolk is nothing short of sensational.

It gives a festive glow to the 130,000 people who travel from all corners of the country to see it.

The show also gives a huge boost to the local economy and the so-called "Thursford Effect" is estimated at £8m. We celebrate the achievements of John and his team and wish them all the best for the remaining week of the run.

If you haven't ever seen the spectacular, we would urge you to get along.

Bouncing back in style

The league cup defeat to Aston Villa was tough to swallow for Norwich City. A lesser team might have wallowed, but not the Canaries.

Chris Hughton's team bounced back to a great win against Wigan at the weekend, launching Norwich into an impressive seventh place in the Premiership. Meanwhile King's Lynn Town showed they are a team to be reckoned with too, scoring an impressive FA Trophy win over Telford United, a club three tiers above them in English football.

As if that was not enough Lynn boss Gary Setchell and his men have already dumped out four higher-level sides before Telford arrived on Saturday. That is the kind of East Anglian fighting spirit that inspires us all.

WORDS FOR LIFE

My spirit finds its joy in God
my Saviour.
Luke 1:47



READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY



ALAN PERRING

EXPLOSION OF FROST: A cold, cold day in Long Stratton. If you would like to submit a picture for this feature, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

Some names are just not meant to change

PETER TRUDGILL

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We keep hearing these days about a place called "Thorpe St Andrew". I wonder where it is. I grew up in a part of Norwich called "Thorpe". Strictly speaking, it wasn't part of Norwich, but we thought of it as if it was - we never said we were going to Norwich, we always just went "down the city". And strictly speaking it wasn't called Thorpe either. Our postal address was Thorpe-next-Norwich. But we always called it "Thorpe" - and we still do.

And there's another mysterious place we keep hearing about called "Great Yarmouth". Well, alright, yes, I am being disingenuous. I know perfectly well that's the place Norfolk people call "Yarmouth". But the "Great" is totally unnecessary. The town used to be called that because in the very old days there was also a Little Yarmouth, on the other side of the river. But it's now part of Gorleston, and so saying "Yarmouth" isn't even slightly confusing.

I was also a bit alarmed recently by a sign I saw in the city pointing the way to "Norwich Anglican Cathedral" - until I realised that this was simply the structure which has been known to Norwich people for over nine hundred years as "the Cathedral". There's also another new place called "St John's Roman Catholic Cathedral", but lots of Norwich people won't know what you mean unless you say



"the Catholic Church". On this same theme, some people have actually started saying "John Lewis", but most of us, including the people who work there, still call it Bonds. And somebody somewhere decided to try and rechristen Jarrold's as "Jarrold", but this has made absolutely no headway at all - and the older and more beautiful part of the shop is still adorned with the real name.

Renaming the City Hall "City Hall", without the "the", does seem to have had some success, even though this is based on a misunderstanding of American English.

When Americans say "City Hall", they don't mean the building, they mean the politicians inside it.

But I'm afraid there's absolutely no chance that "The Norwich and Peterborough Stand" will ever catch on at Carrow Road. Norwich City fans are naturally grateful for commercial sponsorship, but it seems unlikely that the boys in the Barclay will ever start chanting "Sing up the Norwich and Peterborough". It's the River End, isn't it.

■ What do you think? Contact newsdesk@archant.co.uk