

Charleston Daily Mail

charlestondaily.com

July 27, 2013

Short takes

FIRE destroyed the Dodgem' Cars, one of the oldest and most beloved rides at Camden Park. A power surge during an overnight storm ignited the fire, officials said.

"That was my favorite ride in the park," said Shawn Wellman, ride supervisor at the park. "It had an old, wooden roof. Once it got lit, it was old and dry and just went up."

The ride was more than 60 years old, a tribute to its good construction and decades of good maintenance. Many an adult's first driving experience was behind the wheel of those old cars.

"The loss of the Dodgem' ride saddens all of us who love the historic rides that are the fabric of this 113-year-old park," Manager Jack Boylin said. "We will do our best to bring back a modern day version of this ride."

With self-driving cars in the future, Dodgem' Cars someday may be the only driving experience for

people. May the replacement Dodgems last so long.

n n n

THE state Racing Commission refused to send to the Ohio County prosecutor reports on animal cruelty that led to sanctions against James Grace, James Bloom and Christopher Bever, accused of mistreating greyhounds at Wheeling Island.

The commission pulled the licenses for Grace and Bever and suspended Bloom's for six months.

Grace and Bloom were cited for not taking a dog with a possibly broken leg to a veterinarian, while Bever is said to have hit and jerked dogs.

Teachers, doctors and others are required by law to report suspected child abuse. The people who oversee horse and dog racing in the state should

report any animal cruelty to local prosecutors.

If commissioners believe they are protecting the

industry by sweeping cruelty under the rug, they are mistaken. Other states ban dog racing. West Virginia could be next if commissioners continue to ignore animal cruelty.

n n n

WEST Virginia businesses can compete with anyone anywhere, as last year's record exports of \$11.3 billion show. But unfair competition costs jobs and the threats come everywhere.

Consider Felman Production, which operates a

ferrosilicomanganese plant, which makes steel more pure, in New Haven, Mason County.

Felman faces illegal dumping from India, Kazakhstan and Venezuela. Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., testified on behalf of the company before the International Trade Commission.

"It is imperative that American businesses are

allowed to compete on a fair playing field against international competitors," Capito said.

Fair trade helps everyone, but unfair trade is harmful. Felman had to idle its plant for three months. If anti-dumping duties are not renewed, 524 jobs connected to the plant are in peril.

All West Virginia congressmen and senators should back her cry for economic justice.

n n n

THE birth of Prince George to Prince William and his wife, Kate, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge marked the first time a sitting British monarch has lived to see a great-grandchild.

The new mother and father were happy as they took their baby home on a sunny day in London. The child is now third in line to the British throne.

But more importantly, he is a gift to his parents. All children are. The world's fascination with his birth recognizes this very human miracle, which makes a prince the equal to the pauper.

GEOLOGISTS have discovered an oil reserve in the United States that is estimated to be larger than the reserves of Saudi Arabia and all the other OPEC nations.

An estimated 3 trillion barrels of oil lie in the Green River shale formation beneath Colorado and Utah, the Government Accountability Office announced.

"In the past 100 years — in all of human history — we have consumed 1 trillion barrels of oil," Roger Day, vice president for operations for American Shale Oil, told ABC News.

Across the globe, developed nations are tapping into their shale deposits using hydraulic fracturing, a technique developed under the watchful eye of Texas billionaire George Phydias Mitchell in the 1990s.

For decades, the West has been beholden to OPEC nations, which largely are run by despots. Thanks to Mitchell, America can restore her energy independence.

So can other nations. Perhaps these economic changes will bring about political changes — causing more nations to open up and move toward democracy.

Drill, baby, drill may yet save the world. And to think, the man who sparked this revolution was a capitalist with a degree in petroleum engineering.