

# There's a time to protest, there's a time to stand

Imagine a child watching as men lower his father's casket into the ground, seeing a widow receive her husband's flag as a symbol of his service for this country, or a family member leaning over the casket of a fallen soldier.

I have a lot of respect for people who have fought for this country, who continue to fight for this country and the families of these people.

My family has a history of people who have fought for this country, and there are still some who continue to protect this country today.

These Americans are why I stand for the national anthem,



## Commentary

**Brooke Darden**

**News Editor**

Pledge of Allegiance and acknowledgment of the flag.

Growing up, class would not begin without first reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

I grew up listening to my mother sing the Star Spangled Banner at every Friday night rodeo in Pine Bluffs, Wyoming, and then I started to sing it myself at all my school's events.

There was never a moment in my life where I doubted why everyone stood up to respect our flag.

Then recently the controversy of kneeling or not even being present during the national anthem arose in the NFL.

I respect people who choose to do this because people fought for the right to have that freedom; however, I believe that

we should respect those who fought those battles.

I stand for the flag because of those who have fought and continue to fight to protect America's freedom.

My great uncle fought in World War II in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a medic, and as a medic, he would take turns with others who were serving to go in and out of the battle.

He had already taken his turn of going into the battle and helping as much as he could; however, he ended up taking another guy's place due to a jeep not starting.

My great uncle then went in to help the man who had

been shot and ended up getting shot himself. From this he lost a leg and an arm. He later died of a brain tumor.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, more than 1.2 million Americans have died protecting this country. I believe that standing to recognize the fallen shows respect as well as a "thank you" for giving us the lives we have today.

I also stand to be proud of the United States of America. There has been pain throughout history, but without that pain, we wouldn't be where we are today.

The problems in the past, present and future help pave a

path for America and help make a change. I am not proud of the injustice that has occurred in our country, but painful moments created change.

Without these challenges, there would be no history, no change, no lessons and no pride in being American.

Finally, I stand for the flag because it unites this country.

If we put aside politics, race, gender, and any other topic that divides everyone, we are all people.

We can disagree on many subjects, but when it comes down to everything, we live in one of the greatest countries of all, and we are so blessed to be American.

We are able to worship in public, protest, speak our minds, and even write pieces like this where in many other places people do not have those rights.

I stand because this flag unites who we are as Americans and how we got to where we are today.

I do not protest that we all need to stand for the flag, but I stand because I wouldn't have the life I have today without the flag, the soldiers who fought for our freedom and those who continue to protect this country.

There is a time to protest, but there is also a time to respect and thank those who let you have that freedom.

This is why I stand.

# Goldfish, trailer parks, air mattresses: College adulting

*Ring... ring... Ring...* "Hi, Mom. It's Gracie, I have a question. How do you soften butter?"

Conversations like the one above happen on daily basis with my personal human-encyclopedias, because their baby girl has officially been dipping her toe in the pool of adulting.

I will just say now, all those years you ignored the simple phrase, "you're going to need to know this," will come back to haunt you with a vengeance when your favorite, white T-shirt comes out tie-dyed.

## Stage 1: Procrastination

I started my search for my first apartment a lot like how I start studying for my school finals; I waited till the last minute and ultimately regretted it.



## Editor's commentary

**Jenna Piper**

**Tri-Editor**

For the first two weeks of school, I was living out of my car and sleeping on my friend's couches in Westwind's trailer park. When my roommate Vinny and I had finally found a home we were not allowed to move in until the current tenants moved out and the carpet got shampooed.

I know my living situation could have been worse, and I am forever grateful for my time on those couches, but as I

made my way out to my car in my bathrobe with slippers on my feet for the millionth time, I realized I was a set of hair curlers and a cigarette away from becoming my grandma.

## Stage 2: Move-In Day

When the landlord gave the OK it took me no more than one hour to buy toilet paper, ramen, plastic utensils and set up the air mattress in my bedroom. Dorothy wasn't lying when she

said there's no place like home.

Vinny eventually went to Walmart and bought a lawn chair to serve as furniture. Without wifi, I had to pass the time with homework and books (I actually downloaded the Netflix app and tested my parent's patience as the family data plan inched closer to its limit).

## Stage 3: Got your crap together

Eventually, we acquired secondhand furniture, gathered kitchen ware that wasn't disposable, and hung a 3D picture of a bass fish on the wall. Our rental was no longer just a rental, it was home.

However, I soon realized my meals were no longer going to prepare themselves in a cafeteria, and my editor's salary could no longer keep

up with my love for Arby's and Panda Express. I was going to have to put that kitchen ware to use, but there was one problem; I was no Julia Child.

## Stage 4: JK, your crap isn't together

My mother being one of the best cooks I know on this side of the Mississippi, turned out to be more of a burden instead of blessing in this stage of adulting. I never thought to learn how to cook because there was no point in trying to match Debbi Piper's fried chicken.

Recipe.com became my best friend, along with Hamburger Helper and instant mashed potatoes. I learned little tricks like washing the dishes before you put them in the dishwasher (as crazy as it might seem)

and separating your clothes before you wash them.

## Stage 5: It is what it is

A month down the road we welcomed a third roommate into our dysfunctional home, and now we are a family. We're the kind family who saw abandoned goldfish, brought them to into our home, went to Walmart, and came home with more goldfish and a picasimus that we named Casa.

A Planter's peanut can is holding my kitchen utensils and duct tape is securing our grill to the deck in protest of the Cheyenne wind.

At this point in a college kid's life, at least in mine, it's easy to look at your situation and wonder why others have it better than you or become impatient because

you stare out your window and look at your 1990 used Buick Century, and instead envision a jet-black 1967 Shelby GT 500 in your driveway.

Yet, it's nights when I come home from a long day at the newsroom and see my little family sitting at the dinner table with a homecooked meal or wake up to Vinny feeding Casa and the goldfish that make me wish days on Montalto Drive will never end.

Here's the real kicker, the stages of adulting are infinite, and each day the real world shows more its true self, and it can be frightening.

*Ring... ring... Ring...* "Hi, Dad. It's Gracie, I have a question. Why did I get an email saying I was no longer on the cell phone plan?"