

Bald heads better than 'Locks'



CHRISTIAN MCPHATE
OPINIONS EDITOR

Recently, I went to the hair salon and had about 10 inches taken off my hair, for a job that I was desperately seeking — a substitute teacher. In addition, I needed the damn haircut, for the length of my hair had reached the middle of my lower back, so the hairstylist cut it up to my shoulders.

God, I had forgotten what it felt like to get a haircut. No longer would I have to worry about getting my hair caught in the numerous bolts from the gods of pain covering the back of the classroom chairs, or the demons of the nylon seatbelt.

A couple of days later at school, some students and an assortment of random strangers asked me if I donated my hair to "Locks of Love." I looked at their inquisitive expressions and replied, "No," which of course was followed with a redundant reply of "Why not?" with a shocked look splattered across their features as if I had gone against all the gods of conformity and refused a requirement that was decreed by the divine beings themselves.

For all you non-participant in society people out there, Locks of Love is a non-profit organization providing hairpieces to thousands of "financially disadvantaged" (poor people) children under the age of 18 who suffer from long-term hair loss from medical conditions like alopecia areata, chemotherapy or some other type cancer or pharmaceutical treatment.

According to their website, "Locks of Love is not a manufactur-

er of any type of hair replacement product or hair care product. As a charity and strictly a charity, we must purchase the custom prostheses we provide for our recipients."

Tyronepa.com reported that a for-profit wig making company started the receiver-of-donated-hair organization with a little help from a nurse, Madonna Coffman who spearheaded the charity initiative when she developed alopecia after receiving a hepatitis vaccination. The Internal Revenue Service granted the organization a charity status after a volunteer board of directors was established and the new organization left the profiting company. Each week, over 2,000 hair donations arrive through the mail, with 80 percent of hair donors being children.

"She's always had a lot of hair," Danene Metzendorf said of her six-year-old, who cut 15 inches off her hair to donate. "When I had the ultrasound when I was pregnant with Elise you could see her hair waving around."

So where does all the donated hair go?

According to an Oct. 24 report in the Morrison County Record, the charity creates over 2,000 hairpieces today for recipients in all 50 states and Canada. A mold kit arrives in the mail for the family of the bald child who creates a fit cap for the designated economically disadvantaged boy or girl to insure the proper placement of the hairpiece, and then sends the molded skullcap to the organization's creation plant.

The donated hair with fitted skullcap are sent to a factory in Indonesia by the manufacturer where the wigs, which retail between \$3,500 and \$6,000, are created through a masterful process involving special needles. Locks of Love must pay for the manufacturing costs even though they provide the free hair.

Lauren Kukkamaa, communications director of the Locks of Love program, explained that a combination of doctor's diagnosis, a photo, two letters of recommendation and a copy of the parent's most recent tax returns determine the eligibility of the bald child and "if not for free, a hair piece will be provided on a sliding fee schedule."

"We will take six to 10 inches with the understanding that the hair will be sold to offset the cost of manufacturing," Kukkamaa said.

According to the slogan repeated over and over on the numerous Web sites and news reports that blow the horn of hair donation, "These hair pieces help restore the children's self-esteem and confidence."

By teaching the children that they must hide their baldness from a world of judgmental surface junkies, and reinforce the negative feelings of being seen with a baldhead at so young of age?

Why should we as a nation of concerned parents, children and citizens strengthen the "you-don't-look-right-bald-so-wear-a-hair-piece-to-hide-your-problems-from-the-world-around-you" agenda?

Listen, I understand that everyone's heart is in the right place with the hair donations and the founding of the company, but why not send a positive message filled with true feelings of self-esteem to the children cancer survivors—to all cancer and disease survivors?

Baldness is more than okay.

It is divine.

Who cares that people look at you with eyes of judgmental fire and condemn you with looks of disgust.

You are bald and beautiful.

You are a survivor.

Let the beauty of your baldness shine and eventually the whole world will understand and accept that not all people have hair.

Campus Voices

Q: Why is voting important?



"It gives young people a say in the government they don't have otherwise."

— Shaina Post, 18, freshman, undecided



"Because I don't want to be one of those complainers who didn't participate."

— Rochelle Tuvilla, 19, junior, nursing major



"My thing is, if people don't vote, then you shouldn't see them complaining about issues in the government or things they see on TV. If we're given a right and freedom that other countries don't have, why not utilize it?"

— Dominique Calhoun, 20, junior, pre-med major



"Voting is important to me because even one vote can make a difference in who gets elected."

— Dr. Adalberto Garcia, professor of foreign languages

Hussein hanging in suspense



ROBERT FOX
STAFF REPORTER

Just in case you haven't heard, Saddam Hussein has been tried, convicted and sentenced to hang by an Iraqi court.

No matter where you stand on the war in Iraq, you can't say you didn't see it coming. You also can't say the gulf it ripped around the world was unexpected.

Everyone against the war in Iraq has expressed everything from disappointment to disgust with the ruling. The rest of the world is celebrating a momentous occasion for the Iraqi people.

The million dollar question is what happens next.

Several of the European nations have suggested his sentence be commuted to a life sentence. There is more than one problem with that idea.

Yes, as far as we have come morally and intellectually we should have something better than capital punishment.

No, it won't bring back the dead.

That aside, not following through will make the new regime in Iraq and the rest of the world look weak.

Being perceived as weak, militarily or otherwise, tends to get people

hurt or killed.

Letting him live will give those that still support him a chance to save him, to get him out of prison.

It may also inspire hostage situations for negotiation of his release.

Letting him live will completely undermine whatever perceived authority the Iraqi court system had.

It will send the message that the judicial system is hopelessly flawed and utterly incapable of safeguarding the citizens.

Letting him live could easily inspire terrorists to strike again.

Few militant groups like seeing their membership behind bars. If they can't get him out of jail directly, they will seek revenge.

However, letting him hang doesn't come without its disadvantages.

There is the distinct probability that hanging Saddam will spark a backlash from Sunni insurgents, terrorists and his followers that are still in hiding.

An eye for an eye, a leader for a leader; Saddam's death would hurt them, and would surely want to hurt us back.

Hanging him could easily make the newly won regime look just as bad as the regime that was removed.

That which was begun with blood shall end in blood.

Saddam's regime began with blood and ended in blood.

Oddly enough, his guilt doesn't

seem to be the main concern even among a majority of those opposing the sentence.

Two separate articles point to the sentencing as the sticking point all the way around.

Most of the European nations opposing the death penalty are also suggesting that his trial was not impartial.

Well duh.

I can't honestly think of a single country where he would get a truly impartial trial and sentence.

The war crimes tribunals he is facing and the charges are too widely covered, too well discussed not to influence every potential judge and juror out there.

Virtually everyone in the world has been following the occupation in Iraq and everything tied to it.

Everyone also falls into one of two categories: for the effort or against it.

One side wouldn't mind seeing Saddam dead.

The other side wouldn't mind seeing him live, if for no other reason that to annoy and irritate the first.

Each side would try, convict and sentence Saddam as a reflection of its view of the war.

So we return to the million dollar question.

Look weak and give rise to more potential problems, or bathe in blood and chance a new civil war in Iraq and the Middle East?

Columnist Wanted

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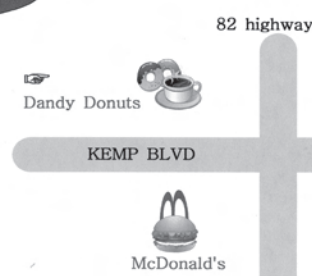


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