
Mouthing the words

Re "Councilman's letter to NYC taken partly from website," front page, June 12: Virginia Beach Councilman William DeSteph has not only shown himself to be a pompous buffoon by writing a letter to New York City on the city's official letterhead, but now he's been exposed as a plagiarist.

Perhaps DeSteph should vacate his elected position so Beach residents will have someone more concerned with local issues and less with New York's.

*Neil Collins
Virginia Beach*

Deplorable amnesia

Why doesn't the New York City Council let Muslims put Islamic flags on the graves of everyone they murdered in the World Trade Center towers? Muslims put mosques near places where they won victories. A mosque near Ground Zero is the Islamists' tribute to the death and destruction of our citizens by the suicide pilots. And the New York City Council wants to let them do it. Have we lost our minds, our backbones or both?

*Harold Arthur
Norfolk*

10,000 calories, 10 minutes

Sunday's Hampton Road's section ("Widow' feasts") lauded

the accomplishments of Sonya "Black Widow" Thomas, who has once again earned a place at the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest on Coney Island.

Thomas ingested 34 hot dogs and buns in 10 minutes, which amounts to 10,200 calories and 28,220 milligrams of sodium. To burn the equivalent calories, she would need to walk 102 miles. She ingested more sodium than one person should have in 14 days.

Competitive eating has become a spectator sport. In 2006, 30,000 people watched the Coney Island contest, and 1.5 million household viewers saw it live on ESPN.

Is it any wonder that in a nation where more than 60 percent of the population is overweight or obese, competitive eating is a sport? Excessive overeating should be viewed as destructive, like any other excessive behavior. Would the editors find a chain-smoking or binge-drinking contest to be newsworthy?

*Dr. Margaret Gaglione
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\$2 shopping toll

Every time I turn around, I read about another proposal to privatize or put tolls on all our bridges, tunnels and highways. By the time I pay all the tolls to go shopping, I won't have any money left to spend. What's next, privatizing our city streets and charging us to get