

LETTERS

Community Resource Center

Assistance League

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I simply posted the letter to express my exasperation about the drawing.

Everyone brought up arguments talking about legal cases and the First Amendment that make burning an American flag legal. The First Amendment says that "Congress shall make no law" prohibiting our freedoms, which still doesn't mean that it's legal, but also doesn't say that it isn't. Laws did not come out of those legal cases concerning a burning American flag, they just said in that instance, it was legal. So, I stand somewhat corrected, and change my stance to: It is not legal, nor illegal, to burn an American flag. To act under the First Amendment, the citizens of America should consider a law that prohibits the burning of an American flag.

The arguments have said that the drawing is protected under the First Amendment, that the school is promoting tolerance, and to "put up with it." And as letter writer Mr. Tom Cumpston said, everyone is entitled to their own opinion, and I agree. Whether or not burning an American flag is illegal, it is a sign of respect to not burn or draw a picture of a burning American flag. It's a sign of respect to the countless soldiers in America's more than 230-year history who gave their lives protecting your freedoms. It's a sign of respect to our Founding Fathers who risked death to create a new nation, with the many freedoms you enjoy today. It's a sign of respect to the American people and America herself.

Burning an American flag goes against being an American citizen, and against the country. If anyone wants to act out against America by burning an American flag, I urge you to go do so in front of American soldiers, and see what happens. If anyone dislikes or hates America, and wants to burn or draw a picture of a burning American flag, I strongly urge you to exercise one of our strongest freedoms; the freedom to leave.

KYLE BROWN
Pollock Pines

'Offensive' flag drawing teaches valuable lesson

EDITOR:
Kyle Brown says that the last time he checked, burning the American flag was illegal. I'm not sure when he last checked, but if he's inclined to check again, he could start with the U.S. Supreme Court's 1989 decision in *Texas v. Johnson*, in which the court ruled that flag burning is expressive conduct protected by the First Amendment.

Mr. Brown was outraged not by an actual flag burning, but by a student's drawing, hanging outside a high school debate tournament. He found the drawing "offensive and wrong," and questioned how a school could allow it to be displayed, let alone drawn in the first place.

Mr. Brown's entitled to his opinion — and so am I — because the First Amendment guarantees it. But if you ask me, the Sacramento high school he visited is doing a fine job of teaching its students that our free society can tolerate and rise above even the most offensive expression. That's a precious lesson we all would do well to remember.

TOM CUMPSTON
Placerville

Send a prayer when you see this tree

EDITOR:
On Friday in Placerville, they lit up the trees that are decorated next to Highway 50. Please watch along the freeway for a tree in front of the candy store. The candy store sign has a woman wearing a pink dress and depicting Lucy and Ethel. You'll see a tree with yellow ribbons streaming down the tree and red, white and blue lights.

This is the tree we decorated for all our hero service men and women in our county. Many of them on the tree will not be home for Christmas, because of deployment. So as you drive by give them a smile and send them your thoughts and prayers.

ANDREA BOYER, Army, Navy mom
Camino

2 letters to the editor impressed me

EDITOR:
Wow! The editorial page of Dec. 6 illustrates two excellent letters to the editor in one publication. Mountain Democrat contributions by Bill Karr and D.O. Miles are right on the mark. I strongly urge readers to refer to this issue and review these letters.

Mr. Bill Karr's reference to the existence of a John Garon is one I too have pondered. It is difficult to believe anyone could admit to his Marxist principles and still call himself an American.

D.O. Miles' letter is a thought-provoking review concerning the direction in which a government may be guided. Following these comments, I would strongly suggest reading F.A. Hayek's "Road to Serfdom" to gain a better understanding of how politics can direct and change a country's political system.

CHARLES BORMANN
Shingle Springs

Support local businesses so they can support you

EDITOR:
I am the owner of a motorcycle equipment store in Placerville. About two months ago I had a father and son come into my store. They wanted to get outfitted with motorcycle riding gear, helmets, goggles, chest protector and boots. I spent about an hour-and-a-half getting them fitted with all of their correct sizes. During this process I informed them I would be giving them a discount because they were buying so much at once, a package deal. I had everything on the counter and started to write them up.

They started to walk out and I told them, "Here is all the stuff we picked out." One of them replied, "I am going to get it online so I don't have to pay sales tax." I told him I spent a lot of time sizing them and why not buy it locally. He said we just needed his sizes so we could buy it on the Internet.

I then asked what he did for a living and he replied, "I am a school teacher." I asked him where do you think your salary comes from? I said, "Local sales tax." He didn't care, they had

already made their mind up beforehand, to try it on and buy online.

Two weeks later the son comes in and wants me to sponsor his school's football team. I told him, "You should call the online company that your dad just bought all your gear from and see if they would like to sponsor your team."

This kind of stuff happens on a regular basis to us and other local businesses. Does this teacher expect everyone else to pay for his salary — and what is he teaching our kids? Do you think these Internet companies pay for our local schools, fire and police departments? Do these Internet companys employ any locals or sponsor our community events?

So next time you go to buy something online, ask yourself, can I get it locally? If you can, buy it in town. It is too late for us, we are moving to Folsom, but maybe this will help others.

BRIAN JONES
36 year resident and son of El Dorado High School teacher
Placerville

Great eatery right here in Placerville

EDITOR:
Although our town of Placerville has some fine restaurants, they are in for some competition, and by that I mean the Foothill Grill.

My family has enjoyed several weeks of deliciously seasoned and prepared three course meals from the Foothill Grill, which is the new El Dorado High School Culinary Arts restaurant, on campus right here in Placerville. If anyone is interested in trying a new restaurant, I recommend you give Foothill Grill a try.

The budding chefs/students under the guidance of the Chef Mike do a fantastic job of delivering a wide assortment to make a culinary feast (great portions too)! They currently serve only on a to-go basis, yet the meal is also a budget delight at only \$10. To try the restaurant, e-mail the grill and ask to be put on the grill's e-mail list Foothillgrill@eduhd.k12.ca.us and the grill will e-mail you the menu for the upcoming week, of which you will be certain to order because your mouth will be watering just reading the menu. And then you can just pay for it when you go to pick it up. Isn't that great?

Believe me, it is worth trying and best of all you will be supporting your town's local high school culinary arts program. Especially while it is holiday season, what better way to end the day than to pick up dinner — and a extraordinary three course one, at that.

My family all agrees that the Foothill Grill is one of the best restaurants in this town. Go Cougar chefs!

DEBRA YUGELEVIC
Camino

Community Resource Center a lifeboat

EDITOR:
My husband and I have spent many hours the past several days at the Community Resource Center (CRC) helping Rene Evans (the director) in any way we can.

It has been extra busy the past two weeks with the weather turning cold and more people coming in to take advantage of the overnight shelter, get tents, warm clothes, and have a hot cup of coffee and someone to talk to that really cares.

The CRC is a place for homeless and disadvantaged people to come and connect to resources that can address their immediate and long-term needs.

In the past week there have been several newcomers and we happened to be there when three of them came in the doors from the back porch with the rain and wind on their backs. They looked so bedraggled, wet and cold, but more alarming than that they looked lost, scared and it appeared as if they had lost hope and were desperate for anyone to help with their situation.

As the days went on I came to see the CRC as a lifeboat for the disadvantaged in our community.

When I looked up lifeboat in Webster's Dictionary it said, "A boat for saving people in case of a ship wreck."

Well, in our culture and economy many people have been shipwrecked in their lives, they have been thrown overboard into an angry, unforgiving sea of life. They are drowning, they have no more strength to hold their heads above water and many of them feel as though they are going down for the last time.

And then someone tells them about the CRC and they make it to the building and come in those doors and after a warm welcome from a caring volunteer. They begin to feel as if they have been thrown a life ring.

The tension and anxiety begin to fade ever so slightly. They begin to see that someone is holding onto them and trying to help them from going under, and that life ring begins to pull them into the lifeboat where they can again find some hope that things will be better.

We cannot solve many of their problems but we can

walk beside them and encourage them and hopefully guide them towards a shore where they again will stand on solid ground and begin to move forward in their lives.

JANIS CARNEY
Camino

Groups move to rebuild the Brockliss Bridge

EDITOR:
The Friends of El Dorado Trail have agreed to take the lead applying for funding for the Brockliss Bridge.

Several groups met in Shingle Springs and agreed to work together to rebuild the Brockliss Bridge. The old bridge site, near Pacific House and Highway 50, is the focus and funding is the first step. Friends of the El Dorado trail will lead this effort, with the support of the Pony Express Trail Association and Equestrian Groups led by Melba Leal.

"I have been working on this project for 20 years," states Melba Leal. "We need all the potential users to come together and get this done."

The Brockliss Bridge is the single missing piece for the Pony Express Trail, from Sacramento to Missouri. The bridge would also allow equestrians, hikers and mountain bikers to cross the American River and is part of the El Dorado Trail.

"The FOEDT enthusiastically work with other groups to benefit the majority interests of El Dorado County," said Mike Kenison, a member of the board of the Friends of El Dorado Trail. "We have the resources, energy and enthusiasm, to rebuild this bridge."

An application will need to be submitted in the next month so this group has a lot of work to do.

MIKE KENISON
Friends of the El Dorado Trail

Thank you, Assistance League, for helping youth

EDITOR:

On behalf of Tara Turrentine, Noemia Plank and the Edwin Markham Middle School community, I would like to extend our gratitude to the women of the Assistance League who very generously implemented the Operation School Bell program benefiting 41 Markham students. They were provided a gift of \$100 each to spend on much-needed items such as shoes and socks, jackets, shirts and pants at Wal-Mart.

We greatly appreciate the time and fundraising of league volunteers who made this day so special for our students. The young people enjoyed getting to know these wonderful ladies, expressed through many hugs and thank yous, as they were assisted in choosing their individual items. The Assistance League has truly made a difference for these middle school students.

NANCY LYNCH, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Placerville Union School District

Thanks for supporting dogs, group

EDITOR:
On behalf of the Placerville police service dogs and Life Trials I would like to thank all the wonderful merchants for donations to our joint fundraising event held on Nov. 13. Unfortunately space limitations don't allow me to mention all by name.

Thanks to everybody who attended and thanks for the support of these two worth organizations.

TRACY WICKSTROM
Life Trials

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