

**LETTERS**

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inherently beautiful, but unfortunately we all come from backgrounds that lead to different interpretation of the language used. Language seems to be the issue, while love is the message.

How can we bring heart into language? How can we bring people together rather than separate us? In accordance to the quote above, it seems that all religions are respected and appreciated, what can we do to show that?

I enjoyed the tree-lighting ceremony. I felt under-represented during the prayer because of the specific language used, and I would have liked to be included. I was not angry, I just felt separated from the group. This is the trouble with language. We can unintentionally make people feel excluded, unaccepted, or separate from the whole. I do not believe this was the intention of the prayer, but a result that has created much divisiveness among people of different beliefs for a long time.

In honor of the true meaning of Christmas, I extend the offering to Love More this season. See beyond language, use inclusive language, and respect each other for their intentions to be good.

Gary Jones



To the Editor:

So what exactly are American values?

In the news recently, Donald Trump made comments regarding the temporary restriction of Muslims entering into America until credible vetting could be established. And then the outbursts exploded from all directions including Obama, the liberal press, elite Hollywood types, Hillary Clinton, even Republicans — all feigning outrage.

Now these self-righteous groups/individuals, so “deeply” offended by Trump’s comments, are lecturing the rest of us on American values. Really?

Ten’s of thousands of unborn babies slaughtered; body parts being sold. God kicked out of school and replaced with political correctness and “progressive”

agendas. President Obama lies to our face over and over about keeping our doctor and insurance. The Justice Department refusing to press charges against Hillary Clinton for acts others already have served or would serve prison time for. Four Americans died and Hillary lied over and over about Benghazi. The Supreme Court changes our Creator’s definition of marriage. A corrupt government is driving our country trillions of dollars in debt.

American values, you say? Trump wants to protect us and he doesn’t represent American values? Personally that’s one value I’d like to see evidence of from our “Commander in Chief.”

Jeff Mackey



To the Editor:

I’m an 86-year-old widower, but had the joy of being married to my wife Jessie Mae nearly 66 years before she suddenly died in 2014. She was from a strong Christian family, and I was not!

Slowly I became a strong Christian believer and I know I’m a better person for having the “belief”! I therefore am very glad some readers were offended by Wendie Vermillion’s letter of December 2 and wrote their own letter on the subject of having a prayer before the lighting of the Christmas tree.

So I thank readers like Sharon Thorkildson and Bruce Williams for speaking out in favor of the specific prayer that was offensive to Wendie Vermillion.

This is the first time I have ever written a letter to a newspaper editor on any subject matter!

Jack Sherman



To the Editor:

Thank God for Bruce Williams, Jodi Ford, and Sharon Thorkildson who wrote in to bring some rationality to the discussion regarding the opening prayer at the public lighting of the Christmas tree celebration.

After all it is the Christmas season, a time for joy, hope, and humble expressions of faith.

Greg Vandehey

To the Editor:

On November 30, an organization dedicated to serving the seniors and disabled adults in our Sisters community ceased to exist. Volunteers in Action “ViA” has been working in Central Oregon since 1995, providing free services such as transportation, friendly visiting, respite care and construction of accessibility ramps and installation of grab-bars.

ViA worked with a small, cost-efficient annual budget, however, with increasing competition from larger and more visible organizations for grant funds and donations, their funds ran out.

Like many others in Sisters, I was a volunteer for ViA for more than 10 years, primarily transporting care recipients to medical appointments in Bend or Redmond. I loved ViA’s simple model. Those in need could contact the call center coordinator, who would do minimal screening and obtain all the pertinent information regarding their need. She would then match them with an available volunteer.

Without ViA, care recipients needing transportation assistance will need to apply to COIC (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council) to be approved for transportation by bus, or some may qualify for individual drivers or taxi service. I hope the recipients will receive the same caring service they received from the ViA volunteers, but I have my concerns.

My reason for writing this letter is to bring awareness to the needs of the seniors and disabled citizens of Sisters. They are somewhat invisible to most of us. They remain at home, mostly living alone. Unlike us, they are not participating in group activities at churches, schools, and in their neighborhoods. They may have an ongoing need, or it may be temporary. They are trying to cope with a whole set of challenges that those of us, who are younger and active, have not even thought of.

I urge our City and the other organizations serving our community to give some needed attention to the low-income seniors and adults with disabilities. Why can’t we create a Sisters call center, so that those seniors in need in Sisters can find help and matched with a willing volunteer?

Ronni Duff

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