

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

sign begging for money from strangers seems like a good idea. Here is a nation that will give billions to bail out arrogant and fraudulent incompetents, but where a motorist giving a hand out to a destitute person on the curb warrants a \$450 fine.

Yes, some of these people might be alcoholics financing their next bottle of cheap liquor. Yes, some might appear unsavory to our standards, and yes, some are struggling with reality or demons. But who are we to judge? They are people, human beings, and some really are hungry, some really do need the gas money to get back home, and for some their faith lies only in the existential validation that a quarter brings. Indeed, what would Jesus do? No Christian, or any religious or moral person, should stand for such a banishment. Every charity should demand a permit and line the streets with cans and cardboard asking for donations, in evidence of solidarity.

Many of us give to our favorite charity. We should, and that is all well and good. It's nice to know your money is going to the right places for the right reasons. But there should be some spare change available to give directly to a person in need. That brief personal connection acknowledges their presence. That you do see them and they do matter is good for the soul. Look them in the eye and show them you care. Call it karma or compassion, it matters. It has less to do with who they are than with who you are.

So, what has happened to civic morality in Medford, Roseburg and Cottage Grove? Why this creeping antipathy instead of more

compassion? The sheer audacity of requiring a "license to beg," the utter nonsense of ranking traffic flow above human charity, demonstrates moral blindness. The citizenry needs to take responsibility and overturn this embarrassment that reflects upon themselves and their community. Until then, for shame.

Mark Murphy
Creswell

MARKET OF TV CHOICE

If the Market of Choice TV was typically tuned to a news show and on Election Day they chose to change the channel to The Food Network, I could better understand Lisa Hammack's disappointment (Letters, 2/12) at not being able to watch the inauguration there.

MC has customers with many view-points, and others may have wanted to get away from news as they drank their morning coffee. To change the station to accommodate one person on one day may seem like a reasonable request to that person. But what about the next time someone came in and wanted to watch a sports event or a science program or another news event?

I'm sorry Hammack missed viewing the inauguration, but the MC TV seems more like an ambience feature than a source of current events, and The Food Network is a good choice from that perspective. I hope people will not expect retailers to be all things to all people as they conduct business and try to consider all of their customers in doing so.

Annetta Forrer
Eugene

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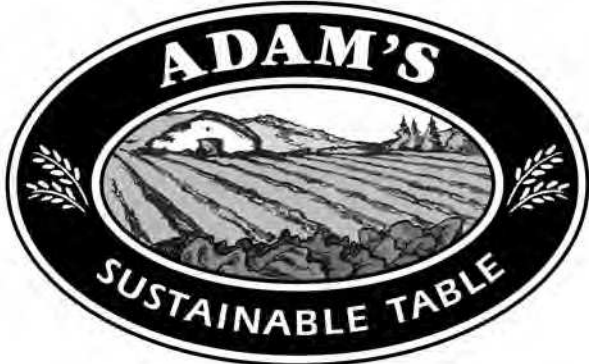


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