

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Comments affect public safety

I attended a Dallas City Council meeting (on Nov. 16), where there were over 150 citizens in attendance as well as reporters and video cameras.

Typically, there are five or six in the audience. Most were there to listen and/or comment on the commotion created by the hateful and bigoted anti-Muslim generalizations that councilor Micky Garus posted on his "Micky Garus Dallas City Councilman" Facebook page. I listened to comments from the audience and also the comments that eight of the nine councilors made regarding this issue. What surprised and worried me was that not one of those that spoke made any reference to the increased security risks our community now faces as news of Mr. Garus' comments spreads around the globe.

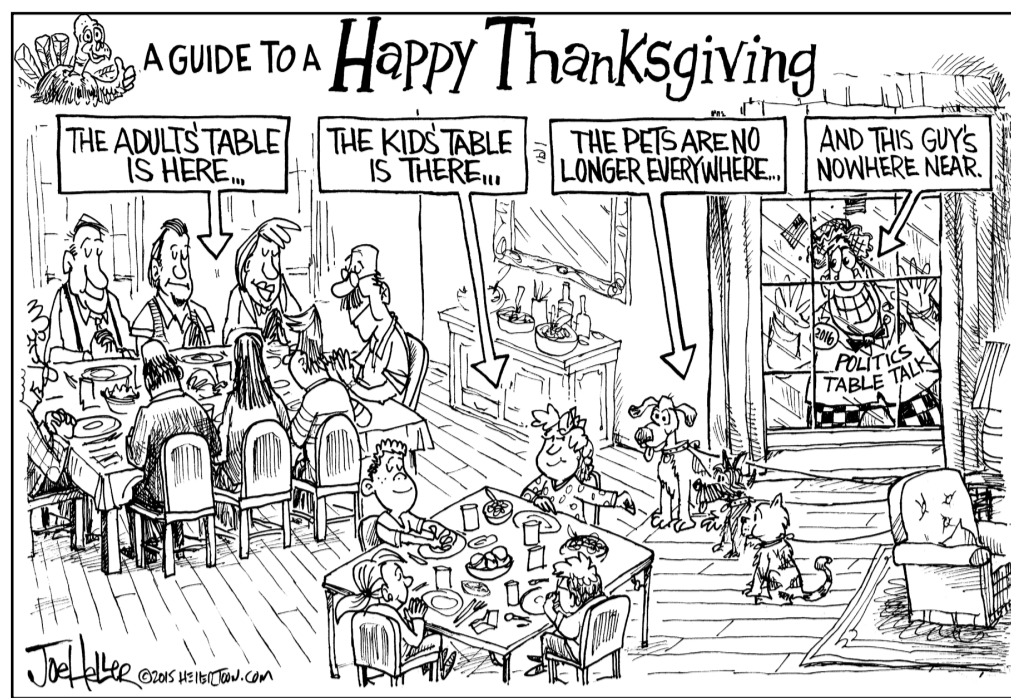
In this day and age of global communications, no community is isolated or insulated from the eyes of the world. One of the best attributes of living in Dallas is the relative safety and security from outside influences that we, until now, have taken for granted. All that may have been changed by Mr. Garus' irresponsible comments and the continued publicity that I'm sure he and his supporters are enjoying. Someone reminded me of the bull's-eye that Mr. Garus featured on his yard signs when he ran for city council. Now, that bull's-eye is on the City of Dallas. Great.

Joe Koubek
Dallas

Dallas deserves to be 'safe, livable'

As a resident of Dallas I embrace the mission statement of the city of Dallas "to maintain a safe, livable environment" for all its citizens and its vision "to foster an environment in which Dallas residents can take advantage of a vital, growing and diversified community that provides a high quality of life."

How can we as parents and residents claim to have a "safe, livable environment" when our elected officials publicly threaten physical violence against a group of our most vulnerable children and school ad-



ministrators who support the rights and safety of these children?

How can we have a "vital, growing and diversified community" when our elected officials disparage adherents of minority faiths?

Will the new face of our city be one of bigotry; one where children are not safe? How will this new image affect the just adopted City of Dallas 2015/2016 Economic Development Strategy? Who will want to stop or set up shop in a city that has elected officials that at a minimum practice permissive bigotry or let threats of violence against children go unchallenged?

The response of the city of Dallas City Council to the public rants of one self-described bigot must not be passive or sanitizing. Instead, the council needs to forcefully speak out against this type of behavior and adopt a policy of conduct for elected officials that clearly ties their personal behavior to the welfare of our city.

Give the residents of Dallas the community we want and deserve. A community that has a "safe, livable environment" and is "vital, growing and diversified."

Kelly Crawford
Dallas

Politics needs dose of common sense

I'm curious to know if anyone else has asked the question, "How did France immediately know where the key ISIL targets were after the Paris attacks?"

If this information was obviously available, why

have these locations not been targeted before by the U.S.? What are we really doing in the Middle East to fight terrorism?

I believe we should cherish the lives of the youth of this country above playing politics.

Let's get them out of harm's way, tighten national security at all levels and defend our own borders. It can be done!

God forbid logic and common sense ever confuse the realm of politics.

Joetta Chrissakis
Dallas

Leave councilor Garus alone

I am writing to support Micky Garus in what his Facebook page statement was. Yes, Islam is evil. Look at what the terrorists did in Paris, France, on Friday, Nov. 13.

I know Micky is a good citizen of Dallas, grew up and attended schools here and has a wife and children in our community.

He ran for city council to bring change to an otherwise stagnant community. We voted for him and now we must stand by him.

He owns a business, teaches concealed weapons courses to members of our community, and holds seminars on emergency preparedness training for the public.

The people from the Left that drove to our little town to rally against him should just go home and take care of their own business. Leave Micky and Dallas alone.

Nelda Carroll-Allegar
Dallas

Pedestrian wonders why car hit her

I was in the crosswalk going east on Washington Street across from Jefferson Street. I was in the middle of the street when he hit me.

Why did he not see me? I was in a bright green coat. It was not raining just a light mist.

He hit me on my right knee and I fell across his hood. It made me so mad he hit me. I just wanted to go home. So I walked home.

My son was just leaving for work, he said you should have gone to the police. What would that do? Was he on his phone talking? Was he texting? What kept him from seeing me?

I have always walked all over Dallas or rode my old bike. I do it for my health, but I could have been killed.

Alice Down
Dallas

Garus not a racist

Micky Garus said publicly what most decent people still think privately on two topics, and got beat up for it. His intolerant attackers were all from the "tolerance" crowd. Go figure.

And no, pointing out the violent and intolerant nature of Islam is not "racism." Islam is not a race.

Tim Gratsinger
Monmouth

Bias is everywhere

Identifying bias can be a difficult task. It is all around us even if we choose not to look for it. Journalists and elected officials might claim that their decisions are not influenced by it but I don't

believe that is possible.

Recently, we have seen our very own city councilor's bias. He has shown a personal concern for Muslims controlling our government. He has also displayed that he has bias towards the safety of his daughter. He worries that sexually deviant boys or men will claim they identify as a woman to give them a free pass to go into the girl's bathrooms and locker rooms.

In the Nov. 18 issue of the *Itemizer-ObsERVER*, there was a front-page story covering the first Dallas City Council meeting since Micky Garus made the news. The number of supporters shadowed the number of opponents for Micky. Unfortunately, the article seemed slanted by the bias of the reporter. All three of the people who spoke before the council against Micky were quoted and only one of the larger number who supported him were quoted. Why should this be presented to readers in such a contrary manner?

I realize that it is not politically correct what Micky said, but it did take political courage to voice his true feelings. Come next election, the voters will have a better idea of where he stands and if his views reflect their own like they did at the council meeting. Imagine if we knew where all the other councilors stood on important issues so we could determine if they will represent us well.

Isaac Maiden
Dallas

'Merry Christmas,' not 'Happy Holiday'

Well, it is quickly approaching the end of 2015, and there are only two more holidays that I recognize between now and Dec. 31.

The first is Thanksgiving, where I give thanks to having survived another year of increasing regulations and intrusion on my personal privacy here on the fruited plain, and the other is Christmas, where I celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

Apparently, to celebrate a holiday, everything that I am supposed to say is governed by what a governmental authority says is appropriate and, for the first time in my life, I do not believe what any politician or government official says. I do not trust any of them to tell me the truth about any-

thing so I really don't care about the political correctness of how I address or celebrate these occasions.

Everything that we are told by the news media has some kind of a political slant to it, so virtually nothing is being reported accurately. And, we, the people, are supposed to somehow obey increasingly convoluted regulations that are passed by just a few of our elected representatives in secret meetings. We are only made aware of what has happened after the fact, and then it is too late to make any changes, regardless of the bias or deceit that was included in the legislation.

So, when I answer the phone, callers will probably hear me say "Happy Thanksgiving" or "Merry Christmas" or a combination of both.

But I have no intention of wishing anyone a politically appropriate "Happy Holiday."

Richard Evans
Monmouth

Name calling serves no purpose

Those who choose to disagree with Micky Garus's comments certainly have a right to do so, after all this is America.

However those who attack him personally and call him racist and bigoted just are not telling the truth. Micky volunteers many evenings and weekends coaching youth sports.

Encouraging kids to do their best, accept, support each other, come together as a team and be proud as they build character.

This applies to all of the kids he coaches and teaches regardless of religion, color, nationality, or ability.

This is definitely not bigoted or racist!

He also volunteers as a city councilman, runs a business, employs people, pays taxes, supports local causes and charities. In short, a credit to the community.

As to the Muslim threat - just look at the millions of refugees fleeing repressive Muslim regimes in the Middle East and Northern Africa causing absolute chaos in Europe. Does anyone not know that the "I" in ISIS stands for Islamic?

Gene Henshaw
Dallas

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EDITORIALS

Just for today, give Thanks for all we have

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day, the national holiday to give thanks and heal the wounds of the nation.

The first Thanksgiving is thought to be in November 1621, a year after the Pilgrims landed in the New World. After their first corn harvest proved successful, Gov. William Bradford organized a celebratory feast and invited their Native American allies — who had taught them how to cultivate the land — to join them.

The fourth Thursday of

November became the official date of Thanksgiving in 1863, enacted by Abraham Lincoln after a 36-year campaign by Sarah Josepha Hale, a magazine editor and writer, author of the nursery rhyme, "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

Hale had published numerous editorials and sent many letters to governors, senators, presidents and other politicians to establish a national holiday of Thanksgiving.

Franklin D. Roosevelt tried to move the holiday up

a week in 1939 in an attempt to spur retail sales during the Great Depression, but it was met with opposition and moved back to the fourth Thursday of the month in 1941.

In the Willamette Valley, we have a lot to be grateful for. We live in a great country and a beautiful valley, where pretty much anything will grow in our gardens and neighbors care for each other.

It's not perfect, of course. We have our struggles and hardships. But for one day,

take a moment and be thankful for what we have rather than what we don't.

We have some giant hearts here in Polk County, and this year we've started a new series titled, "Community Champions," where we get to highlight and honor those people who stand up and say "yes" to volunteer opportunities.

We know there are many more who give with no thought of return, and hope to share their stories with you in the future.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Polk County. To submit a meeting, send it at least two weeks before the actual meeting date to the *Itemizer-ObsERVER* via fax (503-623-2395) or email (ionews@polkio.com).

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 25

• Polk County Board of Commissioners — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

TUESDAY, DEC. 1

• Polk County Board of Commissioners — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
• Dallas Urban Renewal District Advisory Committee — 5:30 p.m., City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.
• Monmouth City Council — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 2

• Polk County Board of Commissioners — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
• Monmouth Planning Commission — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.

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