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Letters to the editor

Ohio Graduation Test is an experiment without standards

The Ohio Graduation Test will be a good tool once standards are developed, but it will be a poor method to measure the success of kindergarten teachers.

John Eaton, in his letter to the editor of June 20, suggests that the school board should use the OGT results to exact pay cuts from teachers based on the relative success or failure of students.

I would instead suggest that the results be used to measure the effectiveness of the school board, the administrators and most importantly, the parents of students. Perhaps a higher tax rate could be charged to parents who send children to school without breakfast.

Administrators hiring ineffective or marginal teachers could look forward to pay cuts, and, most importantly, school board members that hire bad managers can look forward to losing their jobs.

The OGT is still an experiment without standards for success. Let us not be in a rush to blame teachers for, as yet, unheralded results. Instead let us all remember that education begins at home. School success is based on home preparation and support and we should never lose sight of the importance parents play in the education process.

Rick Redfern
Grove City

Nazarene Church should show fairness

It was announced in the June 20th edition of the *Southwest Messenger* that Secretary of State Ken Blackwell will speak at the Grove City Church of the Nazarene on Sunday, June 26.

A politician's use of the church pulpit is nothing new, and is an activity that both Democrats and Republicans have engaged in for years. It surprised me to learn that this practice does not threaten a church's tax-exempt status, and isn't even controversial.

Yes, the Nazarene Church is a large place where citizens can gather easily, but so is the Grove City High School football stadium, which hosted Vice President Cheney last fall.

Obviously the church sees such a move as a way to promote a candidate without, wink, promoting a candidate. That's fine. In the past few years I have stopped being surprised by candidates' use of loopholes, rule-bending, and overall disregard for decency in campaigning.

My questions are not directed at Blackwell or other candidates like Mayor Mike Coleman, it is toward the churches that host them. Is the aim of hosting a certain candidate to bias a congregation, or to truly educate the community on important issues?

Why is the separation of church and state always seen as a negative liberal idea? Democrats have definitely benefited from using religious forums as well. The separation is also meant to keep churches from being abused by politicians as means to align themselves with being moral. It reminds me of the phrase "Sitting in church doesn't make you a Christian any more than sitting in a garage makes you a car."

I for one respect religion enough to say that I don't

want politicians abusing it.

The so-called "cultural war" harped on by so many media outlets is only serving to pit neighbors against each other. Large organizations like the Nazarene Church have a lot of public influence, and therefore responsibility. If the Nazarene Church is choosing to enter the political arena then I believe they have a duty to their congregation as well as their community to show fairness.

Amber Oxyer
Grove City

GC Council's potential smoking ban creates ire

In response to the Grove City Council's wish to pass a clean air ordinance - it makes my blood boil.

You can burn the Flag as a statement of freedom of speech, but not smoke after a meal? You can say Grove City will get the health department to help us make a law that only discriminates against smokers (yes, we will be eligible for a \$10,000 grant) because we made a law. And don't forget to add in the revenue from fines and added court costs too. Let us jump on the band wagon because everyone is doing it.

Why stop with smokers, next add people with too much after shave or perfume? Yes, perfume and after shave along with scented laundry soap, cleaning products of all kinds can trigger an asthma attack. Indoor clean air is not possible with carpets, drapes, books, cloth, towels, ceiling fans, or anything that can collect dust. Just because something smells clean does not mean that it is clean, a good example is your toilet.

If you want clean air use public transportation, car pool, ride a bike, or walk. Cut back on your gas and electric usage. Don't barbeque or burn any type of fire. All these things put out more toxins than tobacco.

Right now our businesses are booming because people are coming to Grove City from Columbus and other cities because they can have dessert after a meal. And I am not talking about pie, cake or ice cream. As it stands now, a person can feel free to visit many smoke-free restaurants in the area. This is a private choice and if you don't want your family exposed, don't patronize that specific site.

I pray to God that your law will not affect private clubs like the Eagles, Elks, Moose, VFW, AMVETS, or the American Legion. If this law passes, please print a list of council members who voted for this law so our residents have a list of whom NOT to vote for come election time.

Leonita Coakley
Grove City

Letters policy

The *Southwest Messenger* welcomes letters to the editor and guest columns. Letters can be of any topic as long as they are not libelous. Letters that do not have a signature, address, and telephone number will be rejected. Likewise, letters containing profanity will be rejected. Please be brief and to the point. Only the author's name and address will be printed with the letter. Telephone numbers will not be published. The Messenger reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of any letter for any reason. Again, please be brief in your letter. If you have any questions on submitting a letter to the editor, please call Janet Shaller, Southwest editor, at 272-5422. Mail your letters to: Southwest Messenger, 3500 Sullivant Avenue, Columbus, OH 43204; or fax to 272-0684. E-mail to: southwest@columbusmessenger.com