

Letters to the editor

Acrimony in Penn stems from clash of philosophies

When I took the oath of office, I swore to uphold the health, safety and welfare of its residents. I also took on the fiduciary responsibility of Penn Township.

A small group of residents thinks the supervisors have not been looking out for the best interests of the township. A spokesperson for this group, Jill Groff, thinks we should cut services, like parks and recreation. This includes our donations to support Manheim Athletic Association and Lititz Rec Center.

We have a difference in philosophy. I believe we need parks and recreation to maintain a healthy lifestyle for our youth and our families.

This group also thinks we should stop our donations to the Manheim Library and Penryn Fire Company. This is also a difference in philosophy. I believe these services need to be supplied to our residents.

This group also wants to eliminate our streetscape project. They say there is no need for it. Another member of the group, Scott Haldeman, says there is no need for sidewalks or a traffic light on Doe Run Road.

I told him that residents need to be able to walk safely from Manheim to our business district along the Doe Run corridor. He said the safety of Manheim people isn't our concern because they aren't our residents. This is a difference in philosophy, again.

I believe we do need sidewalks and curbing along this corridor and we need to put a light at the shopping center and do improvements to the intersection at Doe Run and Penryn roads for the safety of everyone.

I want residents to know that a big portion of these funds are in an escrow account through contributions made by developers. This group opposes our new zoning ordinance. This is a difference in philosophy again.

Under the old ordinance, we had developers dictating to us and using loopholes. The new ordinance will protect the township from this happening. The new ordinance will pay for itself many times over.

This group says it is against our Transferable Development Rights program, and that it creates a disincentive for developers of single-family developments.

TDRs are a fee that a developer needs to pay for a single-family unit. It goes into a fund that is used for farmland preservation. If a developer wants to take our open space and farmland and develop it, he should be expected to give back to the community by paying a fee to help preserve our farmland. This creates smart growth and protects our future generations from sprawl.

I have philosophical differences with many of the views that are in the four-page handout this group was distributing at one of our recent township meetings.

I am hopeful that this will help clear up some of the differences between this group and the township.

Dave Wood, Supervisor, Penn Township

Corporations as persons

Don't look now, but I think the U.S. Supreme Court has reversed Mr. Gantner. He was my Sunday School teacher. About 75 years ago, he taught me about Adam, Eve and God, and how all persons got started because of the stuff going on in the Garden of Eden.

He never mentioned cavemen or dinosaurs, and I bet he never thought about the Supreme Court. But just like God made persons out of handful of clay and a rib 'way back then, the court recently made persons out of corporations in a decision called Citizens United. God had existence in mind; the court was more interested in elections.

It came to pass that, in the year 2000, more persons voted for than against a presidential candidate the court did not like, and it caused them much work to bring forth the results the court wanted. The court would like to have sent fire and lightning bolts amid the electorate to open their eyes about the right kind of people to choose as their leaders. But that would have tarnished its reputation for being benevolent and impartial.

Yet, when the voting persons again erred in 2008, the justices saw that America needed more persons -- particularly those with loud voices and power -- to keep those persons who were descended from Eden from sinning again.

It was then that the court created "corporate personhood" and bestowed upon every corporation the power to influence the election outcomes participated in by the Eden persons.

Then the corporate persons went forth and amassed great stores of gold and spoke to the land in every election with thunderous voices in order to diminish their enemies.

When it came time to rest, the court looked upon its work and it was good. And -- lo -- it was proclaimed throughout the nation: "Let there be loot!"

See, Mr. Gantner?

Paul Long, Manor Township

Prevailing-wage requirement expensive

Recently, Lancaster County has undertaken a construction project to upgrade handicap access to the county courthouse extension on North Duke Street. The project is in two phases: No. 1 being the replacement of the entry doors on Duke Street and No. 2 being several other improvements within the building. No. 1 is a \$400,000 project and No. 2 is in the area of \$2 million.

In this day and age, this may not seem like a lot of money. But given the fact that most governing bodies

are trying nobly to reduce their budgets, this is a significant expense.

Here is the effect that the prevailing wage has on these projects, given the fact that each is a public project and is subject to the prevailing-wage act.

Lets look at No. 1. Absent the prevailing-wage requirement, the same job would have come in at somewhere between \$200K and \$250K. No. 2 would have come in at no more than \$1.5 million. These are significant savings.

Just because a job is a government or public job, why are the taxpayers forced to pay a premium? This harkens back to the days of the gangsters when legitimate businesses were forced to pay off the gang in order to stay in operation. The only difference is that today we call it legal because it is sanctioned by the government. Just thinking about it makes me disgusted.

I understand that there is a bill lingering somewhere in the state Legislature to reset the project dollar amount before the prevailing-wage requirement is triggered. Any effort by Pennsylvania to reset the amount of the contract trigger for prevailing-wage eligibility is worthless unless it is at least \$1 million.

In the years that I worked at Millersville University, we had to work within a \$25,000 limit. Totally ridiculous. It is high time that the Legislature stops protecting the unions under the guise of guaranteeing votes for re-election but at taxpayer expense.

Charles Robie, Wrightsville