



Letters to the Editor, Sunday, April 4, 2004

Mohawk motivation, individualism: Good idea

When I read the story about Levey Padocs, Jr. and his hair issues, Journal, April 2, my heart just went out to him.

He was struggling in school, so his parents made a deal with him. He worked hard, succeeded and his parents honored their agreement with him.

What on earth was wrong with any of that? Isn't that what most parents want to teach their kids? But what is society telling this bright light of creativity?

Society is telling him to not shine, don't stand out, conform. It is telling him that his choices are offensive. It is telling him that his parent's guidance cannot be trusted. It is telling him to mistrust his own inner guidance.

Are we so uptight these days that a child's hair can cause such a ruckus? Don't we have bigger things to get huffy about? Couldn't those offended parents' energy been better spent?

Thirty years from now do we want our planet in the hands of the people who haven't been taught to think for themselves, who are taught to judge by appearance and who are frightened by creativity?

Or, do we want our planet in the hands of creative free-thinkers who honor the spark in each person and who are not frightened by new ideas?

My ballot is cast for Levey.

Claudia Ghidella

Penn Valley

School district took correct action in 'hairy' situation

I just read the article on the blue- haired, mohawked boy and I must say three cheers for Pleasant Ridge Elementary School Principal Derek Cooper.

Excellent job for not caving in to crazy parents who are willing to tromp on everybody else's rights and even hire an attorney so a 6-year-old can "express himself."

Obviously, schools should have stricter dress codes to put reasonableness back in the classrooms. It's a great argument for school uniforms — some parents can't handle the responsibility.

John Addoms

Grass Valley

Salvation Army, county groups answer cry for help

The Salvation Army of Auburn just recently had a request for help from a desperate woman whose boyfriend had threatened to kill her by putting a gun to her head.

The next day she called for help: could we get her into a safe place, she needed to get out quickly, please help. Crisis intervention action was taken to get her out.

We referred her to seek help from Peace for Families, which specializes in domestic violence; they could even help with a restraining order. She just wanted to get out and into a place for her and her daughter. She had just started a full-time job, employment was verified, it would take at least a month to save enough money for a place to rent.

We suggested she start looking immediately for a place and that we would help with the first month's rent for her to move out of this unhealthy situation and into a safe place.

Through the partnership that the Salvation Army has with the county on homeless assistance funds, we were able to intervene and help a single mom who felt all was hopeless to find hope.

Food and gas vouchers have been given to help her till her first paycheck comes. A heart wrenching message was left at the Auburn office from her with much thanks for giving her an opportunity to start her life over again, many tears of joy for all the help.

Good things are happening in our communities, this is one that should be shared.

The Salvation Army is grateful for the opportunity to serve and meet needs through local donations and collaborative partnerships we have with the service providers in our Placer County.

Michelle Talbott

Social Services Director, Auburn Salvation Army

Auburn

Professionalism of ARD directors questionable

We attended the ARD board of directors meeting on the evening of March 25. After all we have read in the Journal we decided to see for ourselves.

What an eye opener — this was a first meeting for us. First we'd like to compliment Chairman Robert McNamara on the way he conducted the meeting, also other board directors Nina Ashford and Jim Gray.

We questioned the sincerity of Directors Bill Kirby and Scott Holbrook who conducted themselves in a rude and unprofessional manner. Name-calling and accusing all the while they stuffed themselves with pizza and talked with food in their mouth. (They do have breaks or recesses for such.)

Bill Kirby also complained about the cost of the attorneys to ARD, all the while he used up more time being disruptive and disagreeable, much like a spoiled and unruly child.

We know these positions could be better served. We will attend again as we care about our beautiful parks and the much-needed programs that ARD provide. We also thank the ARD employees who work so hard for all of us.

Doug and Kay Lenz

Auburn

Community deserves credit for successful school benefit

On behalf of the Auburn Education Foundation, I would like to thank the staff of the Auburn Journal and especially Stephanie Swanburg for the coverage of our St. Patrick's Day dinner. More than 70 members of the Auburn Union School District staff served 500 dinners that evening. The decorations done by the various classes were great along with the beautiful music of the Skyridge and Rock Creek Choirs.

Because of the support of the staff, parents and numerous businesses in the community, at least 10 new grants will be given to staff members for use in the classroom.

Ed Gilligan

President, Auburn Education Foundation

Auburn

Teacher Tellefson inspires students in arts

As a mom of a fourth-grader who would not be exposed to many of the arts because of state budget cuts, I want to acknowledge a very special and giving teacher.

Mrs. Tellefson, who we were lucky enough to get this year and who is a fourth grade teacher at Auburn Elementary, enriches children's lives. She organizes her class time and her kids in order to fit in the standards required by the state, including the challenging new language arts program that was started this year, and yet makes sure her kids are exposed to the lost art of drama at the elementary level. She introduces them to the world of make-believe.

Recently they performed the play, Peter Pan, and let me say what she can do in a couple of months with the kids is remarkable.

She enhances and changes their lives, giving them new confidence, which includes public speaking, and bonds them to the arts. Teachers such as this should be recognized and applauded.

As a mom of a son who went to bed the night of the play and said, "THAT was the best time I've ever had in my life," I feel that we are fortunate to have Mrs. Tellefson in our lives.

Donna Aleccia

Auburn

Prayer, support works in young cancer patient

To all the kind people of Auburn, Colfax and surrounding communities, my name is David France, Dakota France's father. Dakota's mother and I would like to thank everyone for their help and kindness in Dakota's time of need in 2002.

Dakota's cancer has not come back and we feel he will be just fine. We did have a scare last year as a test came back positive for cancer in his lungs. After more surgery and biopsy of his lung, the test came back negative for cancer. Prayer works.

He is a very positive person, I believe that with this, and prayer from everyone around, he has beat this and will continue to be an inspiration to many people.

Dakota is 7 now and is doing very well in school and very involved in Little League. Although one-handed, he has never let that stop anything he wants to do.

David France

Auburn

Loss of Homer will not fade with time

Tom Homer was liked by just about everyone who met him, but he was loved by so many more.

We have all lost a very special person for our own reasons. I have just lost a best friend. But I am one of those so blessed to have shared a part of Tom's life.

My heart goes out to his family for who this pain is the worst. Tom's pride and joy were his children and grandchildren. Nothing made him prouder. I will miss my friend forever.

Barbara Cain

Auburn