

Letters to the editor

Thank you, Gallup

To Editor:

It has been a humbling experience serving as your head golf professional for 27 years. The bumps on the road don't even begin to cast the smallest of regrets in coming to this community where we were received with open arms and where overnight, my job was transformed from a paycheck to a calling by trusting me with your children. Thank you, what an honor!

Together, we saw our children grow and receive an education beyond reading and writing, helping shape a new generation of productive citizens of whom we are all very proud of. You never made me feel like the immigrant I really am, a person from old Mexico to a region called New Mexico. I am proud of my heritage and beginnings, but I am more proud to have made the choice, not by necessity, but by loyalty to cause, of becoming citizen of this greatest of all nations.

I always played and taught everyone to play by the rules of this great game, which also apply to life. It was not always easy, for at times these rules based on trust, respect and honesty, tend to bring out the true character in all of us. My respect and thanks go to those who learned from these moments, for by example you led and became a role model that helped the growth of the game and the shaping of our community. Don't quarrel, continue teaching; understand that not everyone "speaks golf," which is a language and culture of its own.

You showed many values, mostly honesty, friendship and tolerance in my failures; and, while we must share space with a minority who doesn't believe in the freedom of expression I sought by coming here, or with those who ignore or change rules, sometimes in the middle of a game, let's realize that we don't need to join them, and that we must stand on our principles. They have the right to their opinion, but we have the right to set the record straight.

I'm not embarrassed to admit that it hurt, but I am healing. I was down, but now I'm standing with my head high on the principle that it is the truth and the truth only, the way to serve, survive, walk unshamed and unite a community, even if it means that one is not allowed to play ball for a while. The future is unclear, but I'm ready to reinvent myself with the knowledge and richness of life I received from you.

We know, like gusts of wind, all people, regular folks or the elite who rule, come and go, some for the best and some for the worst. But we the people, who abide by the valued principle of playing by written rules, like the land we stand on, and the red rocks that surround us, remain and go on until we are invited to play again.

Alex Alvarez
Gallup

Facts on the N.M. Cancer Center

To Editor:

Since opening Gallup New Mexico Cancer Center, we have been committed to providing state-of-the-art cancer care to the residents of Gallup and the surrounding communities. That is why we were disappointed to read a story titled "Cancer center condition terminal, chief seeks help or close," which was published in [another local newspaper] on June 15. This article only tells a small piece of a very complicated story.

No one in our organization was interviewed for this article. Instead, the story was based almost entirely on an e-mail that was sent by me to the CEO of the Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital, two state senators and the consultant hired by RMCH to determine the feasibility of bringing the Cancer Center under its umbrella of services. This was an e-mail that expressed to the recipients the situation at hand and what our options could be going forward. This was a communication that was intended for these four recipients to relay a sense of urgency.

The article was correct in stating that we are engaged in talks with the hospital and the county to determine what options there are to continue providing cancer care in the community. The article does not tell the entire story, and if the writer had contacted me, I would have informed him that we are not simply asking the hospital to take over the facility and walking away, which was the perception of employees and patients who read the article and contacted us to express their concerns and fears.

Our first choice in this situation is to continue to provide cancer care to the people of Gallup and McKinley County. They deserve high-quality cancer care without traveling several hours to obtain it. That is why our proposal to the county and RMCH was that our physicians and staff would continue to provide medical and radiation oncology and partner with the hospital to provide cancer care.

In today's challenging health care environment, all health care providers must work together for the needs of patients. Hospitals and doctors working together can provide care that neither can provide separately. That is why NMCC has been working with community leaders and practitioners to provide every opportunity for cancer care to remain available in McKinley county and the surrounding areas. The heart of the care we provide is the people we help when they need it most, and we welcome any thoughts the community may have on how we can continue to best serve them in the months and years to come.

Dr. Barbara McAneny, M.D.
CEO
New Mexico Cancer Center

Letters to the Editor policy

GALLUP — The Independent encourages letters to the editor, which are published twice weekly — Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Letters must include writer's name, address and phone number although only the name and community of residence will be published.

Letters may not exceed 500 words. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. The Independent may choose not to print any letter for any reason.

Anyone may submit a letter, and there is no charge for publication.

Letters may be mailed, delivered in person, faxed or e-mailed to: Editor, The Independent, P.O. Box 1210, Gallup, New Mexico 87305, (505) 722-5750 (fax); editorialgallup@yahoo.com (e-mail).

Independent opinion

Nothing but the truth

This is an editorial about whole truths. Not the half truth that comes from the mouth of this city's top politician, Harry Mendoza, but the whole truth — the part that he conveniently doesn't tell his supporters or the people he was elected to represent.

Over the past two years, the truth from Mendoza's lips is that the city doesn't have the funds to meet the needs of people like the Rev. Jay McCollum who wanted city funds to help bring World Changers here to benefit the poor and the handicapped. The whole truth, as made evident this past week, is that city officials have the ability to raise tens of millions of dollars in bond money for city projects but they would rather claim poverty so they could turn their back on the needs of the people.

But McCollum hasn't been the only one to come before the City Council asking for help in improving neighborhoods in the city. Each time, councilors said they agreed that this was a worthy cause only to be shot down by Mendoza who would claim that the city didn't have the funds to help the people of Gallup. We now know that that was also a lie. The sad part is the council believes Mendoza.

The truth from Mendoza's lips in the past couple of months was that the city needed to lay off the municipal golf pro because the golf course has lost millions of dollars in the last few years. The whole truth, as everyone knows, is that the city needed a scapegoat because of the total incompetence of the greens superintendent, Bob Weekes, and the city decided that person who would take the fall would be the golf pro. Weekes cannot grow grass, but he lies like Mendoza.

The biggest lie Mendoza has told

the people of Gallup concerns the events that occurred when he was 16 years old and an innocent 17-year-old Native woman was brutally gang-raped by a gang of young men from this town.

"I didn't have anything to do with the rape," he alleges, but the whole truth is...

A 1949 article in the Gallup Independent said he was charged with the rape and was not prosecuted because he was serving in the Army.

That's not true, says Mendoza. "I wasn't charged."

Then why did that article say he was? Where is the whole truth?

Court records the Independent uncovered in 1996 quoted one of the five men who did go to prison as saying Mendoza held the victim down while she was raped. Mendoza's name was crossed out on the documents — by whom is unclear but for what reason is evident — to lay the blame on someone else. No one changes court records, but in this case that is exactly what happened. And who benefited? Mendoza.

Court records about the case no longer exist. Shortly after 1996, all records of this horrendous rape were removed from the county courthouse and the person who benefited most from this was Mendoza. The lack of records has made it difficult to discover the whole truth about what happened that night and what his involvement was. So who benefited? Mendoza.

None of this sounds like the story of a man who had nothing to do with a gang rape.

We don't know if Mendoza participated in the rape or not, but all of the evidence that has been uncovered so far indicates Mendoza is not telling the people the whole truth about that night in June 1948. There

is evidence that he was charged, and Mendoza has not been able to come up with a single reason why the newspaper would say that back in 1949 if it was not true.

We also strongly believe that his decision to suddenly join the Army that following January on his 17th birthday had nothing to do with his problems in school, as he says, and had everything to do with a decision by his lawyers and family to get him "out of Dodge" so he wouldn't be prosecuted for rape with the others. After all, it is general knowledge that judges in those days gave defendants an opportunity to join the military rather than face charges.

Going into the Army rather than face rape charges explains why he wasn't prosecuted — he was running from the whole truth. We get a partial truth and not the whole truth.

In the legal system, people who are called upon to testify have to swear an oath to "tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." Mendoza's actions and statements over his long political career has shown that he is incapable of doing that.

The whole truth is out there. When the victim's family comes forward and the people who know the appalling whole truth tell their stories, all of us will be grateful.

Harry lies. Between Harry's lies about the rape and lies through his lapdog, Gerry Herrera, the council should be appalled. The whole truth makes their erroneous decisions a mistake and Gallup suffers.

We ask: Mr. Azua and Mr. Landavazo when are you going to stand up to these lies? When are you going to fund civic projects; fire Weekes, get rid of Herrera, and stand for the truth.



From newsroom to bedroom

Not so long ago in a vastly different media environment there were such things as journalistic ethics. Reporters were prohibited from taking trips paid for by individuals or groups they might cover. They couldn't accept money for speeches. And they surely could not accept money or gratuities in exchange for reporting on a story in which a corporation or individual might have an interest. Too much socializing with sources was also frowned upon.

Today, when news is sold as a product, like toothpaste and erectile dysfunction pills, the press has become a subsidiary of the advertising department, catering to target groups that are most likely to buy advertisers' products.

The ABC News division has taken this one step further. On June 24, it will essentially become a mouthpiece for the Obama administration and its position on reforming health care. A special, "Questions for the President: Prescription for America," moderated by Charles Gibson (who is old enough to remember the days when a wall separated advertising from news), will air from the East Room of the White House. Gibson will also deliver "World News Tonight" from the White House's Blue Room.

The programs should not originate from the East Room and Blue Room. Instead they should be broadcast from Obama's bedroom since ABC (and much of the slavish media) is in bed with this president.

That the media fix is in on health care is evident from ABC's response to a request from the Republican National Committee (RNC) that it be allowed to air opposing views. RNC Chief of Staff Ken McKay wrote to David Westin, president of ABC



Cal
Thomas

News, expressing his deep concern and disappointment with ABC's "astonishing decision to exclude opposing voices on this critical issue on June 24..." In addition to "World News Tonight" and the special, ABC will feature "reporting" on the Obama health care plan on all of its other news shows. No word yet on whether any opposing views will be allowed on those programs.

McKay wrote Westin, "In the absence of opposition, I am concerned this event will become a glorified infomercial to promote the Democrat agenda." Noting that the President "has stated time and time again that he wants a bipartisan debate," McKay wrote that "the Republican Party should be included in this primetime event, or the (Democratic National Committee) should pay for your airtime."

ABC News Senior VP Kerry Smith defended the program, saying ABC "is looking for the most thoughtful and diverse voices on the issue." It is diffi-

cult to see how diverse voices will be heard in a show that features no thoughtful opposition to the Obama plan.

The media have found that Obama sells. With his high approval ratings it appears they are targeting Obama supporters who would tune into the news equivalent of religious programming on which atheists and people with different beliefs never appear.

In doing these programs from inside the White House, ABC has thrown its remaining credibility to the wind and becomes an appendage of their advertisers, the Obama worshippers and the Democratic Party.

Try to imagine this happening in a Republican administration. You can't, because it would never happen.

By the way, guess who's the new director of communications for the White House Office of Health Reform. It's former ABC News correspondent Linda Douglass, who left journalism last year to join the Obama campaign.

This should settle, once and for all, the matter of big media bias. Only those in complete denial could argue there will be anything "fair and balanced" about the ABC programs. And the public, on an Obama high right now, is going to be the big loser in the end when it awakens to the erosion of our hard-earned freedoms. But by then it will be too late.

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The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

-Isaiah 35:1