

OPINION

FIRST AMENDMENT “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Time to ACT on Alzheimer’s

No one wants to think of their loved ones aging, even gracefully. But for many of us, aging with grace has become more difficult as we experience memory loss, confusion and other elements of dementia. And it’s not just our aging loved ones who are impacted by this fate. Each of us individually as we age must consider how we will face the possibility of this fate and the challenges it will bring for ourselves and our care givers in the future. ACT on Alzheimer’s, a statewide collaboration, has invited the greater International Falls community to help prepare for the growing crisis of increasing incidence of Alzheimer’s and other dementia. It’s a great opportunity for this community to make life better for us all. Area residents can learn more about the initiative at a community meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday at Backus Community Center. More information can be found at www.ACTonalz.org Greater International Falls is among the first group of communities selected to use a toolkit piloted by an initial cohort of seven communities. The toolkit will guide the communities through a four-phase process of bringing together people and helping the community begin a conversation about how to become “dementia capable.” On Thursday, an action team will be created to assess and analyze key sectors in the community. That effort will include

businesses, educational institutions, government agencies, the health care community, family care givers and people with dementia and more. The assessments will help to indicate priority areas to be addressed. Creating a more dementia-friendly community takes on an even greater importance in an area with an aging population. Now, about 100,000 Minnesotans live with Alzheimer’s disease and that number is growing, according to ACT. But living in a community that has planned and prepared for a future more friendly to people with dementia is not just for the people who are now experiencing it and who will in the future. It’s also about making life better for people caring for people with Alzheimer’s disease. About 250,000 Minnesotans are now caring for family members with Alzheimer’s. And about 70 percent of people with Alzheimer’s live in their own homes and need support from families and the community, reports ACT. The outcome of ACT on Alzheimer’s will be unique to this community, but the pilot communities decided there was a need to train clinical providers, educate the faith community and designate dementia-friendly businesses. As we prepare for the future, this initiative is our best chance at helping people with dementia age gracefully. It’s now up to us to decide how this community will handle the aging people in our community in the future.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Only few want property annexation

To the editor,
The people who live, build, moved and bought land west of International Falls out of city limits did so because they did not want to be in city limits. But now, because of the Donahue property, with the annexation of this

property, it’s being forced down their throats. And they have no say in the issue. The four individuals who are pushing this Donahue property thing, whatever it’s supposed to be, right is wrong and wrong is right.

Democracy comes when taxpayers and voters want it to come. This annexation should be voted on by the whole school district because it concerns both county and city. I keep hearing the word fair from certain city council members when it concerns them, but never see it happen when the people of International Falls want fairness. Is this Russia annexing of Ukraine? **Darren Wallen International Falls, MN**

GUEST COLUMN

American rudeness and incivility

“What do you mean Americans have gotten ruder?” “Poll after poll has been showing it in recent years. More than 70 percent of the respondents questioned in an Associated Press poll believe people are ruder than they were 20 or 30 years ago.” “Why would that be?” “Life is moving faster these days. Companies are employing technology that has dramatically increased the speed of change. This technology has enabled competition on a global scale and employees, fearing for their jobs, are working long and hard to keep up.” “Yeah, yeah.” “The pace at home is much faster, too. Many couples, having fallen into the big-mortgage trap, are both working. To afford large houses, they’ve moved further out into the suburbs. They’re perpetually sitting in traffic jams, rushing to pick the kids up from day care, and racing to get home to make dinner.” “It’s a free country.” “Computers, video games and other gadgets are isolating people from each other. And many people are



Tom PURCELL

living far away from their extended families — living among people they are not deeply connected to.” “Sounds good to me. My family drives me nuts.” “Even modern architecture is promoting isolation. Look at the older homes built in the 1920’s. Big glorious porches were on the front and the garages were in the back. Homes were designed to invite friends and family to stop in for a visit and some cold lemonade. Now the porch is hidden in the back and the garage is on the front — even our homes are rude to people.” “If you say so, pal.” “As a result of this desensitization and the stress of modern times, we’re seeing more incidents of road rage, more people

cutting in lines at the super market, fewer people holding the door open for strangers. I know I’ve been short with service people at times.” “Being rude with service people is the reason I get out of bed in the morning.” “What’s most interesting is that folks are quick to see rudeness in others, but not in themselves. Only 13 percent said they’d used an obscene gesture while driving. And only 8 percent said they’d used a cell phone in a loud or annoying manner.” “I do both every day on my lunch break.” “It’s certainly true that life IS moving faster and keeping up is more stressful, but that’s no excuse. We all need to get back to the basics. Parents need to do a better job teaching their kids to have respect for others. Adults need to slow down and be more considerate of others.” “Why should we care?” “Because a civil and mannerly existence is not just a more delightful way to live, but one that is essential to a well-functioning society. Don’t ask me, ask Judith Martin.” “Judith Martin?” “You know her better

as Miss Manners. She says that good manners are the philosophical basis of civilization, that it’s essential folks have a common language of civil behavior that restrains their impulses.” “But impulsiveness is my favorite hobby.” “Martin says our legal system was originally intended to punish serious conflict involving the loss of life, limb or property, but the legal system is now forced to handle disputes that the proper use of etiquette used to prevent.” “I ain’t following.” “She says that what used to be an insult is now called slander. What used to be meanness is now called hate speech. What used to be boorishness is now called sexual harassment. If the rules of civility and etiquette were stronger, fewer people would engage in actions that are now considered crimes.” “Slander, meanness and boorishness are against the law? There goes the weekend.” **Purcell is a Pittsburgh Tribune-Review humor columnist and is nationally syndicated exclusively by Cagle Cartoons Inc.**

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Lawmakers in 2013 raised

It’s also a better-than-

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