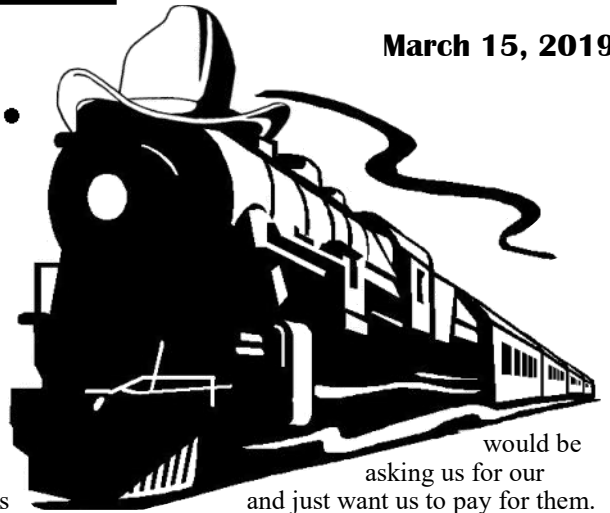


# WHITE HAT ALERT...

Corvallis, Montana

March 15, 2019



## Can My Opinion Make A Difference?

Most every day now, we receive mail from political candidates and organizations asking us for money. We have come to expect that, but it nice if someone would ask us to help by doing something rather than just money. You get the feeling that the solicitors think they have all the answers. We are a nation "of the people, by the people and for the people," so "We the people" should be involved. In fact, we have a responsibility to be involved.

One simple way to make a difference is to write letters, letters to the editor, opinion letters and letters/emails to our political representatives. The following is a true story and an example of what a few people can accomplish when they have a common purpose and work together to accomplish their goal.

Several years ago, we became involved in an effort to have an "inappropriate" book removed from a high school English curriculum. We became aware of the situation when the daughter of a local couple brought home a book that was required reading for her English class. The book was not age appropriate and included sexually offensive subject matter directed toward Native Americans. To require a book that was generally offensive and demeaning to a specific group of people seemed inappropriate to make mandatory for minor aged students.

The girl's parents went to the teacher and asked that he require a more appropriate and positive book. The teacher said that he would allow their daughter to read a different book and that she would be excused to the library whenever the class discussed the required book. Yes, that could be an option, but it would single out their daughter, and, if the book wasn't appropriate for one high school aged student, then it really wasn't appropriate for any of them. None of the students should be required to read it.

The parents shared their concerns with the principal and received the same response, so they attended the next school board meeting. As you might guess, the issue was briefly discussed resulting in the same answer. Conclusion, case closed!

Well, not quite. Here's what happened next:

The parents decided to meet with a few other couples who were also concerned about the inappropriateness of the book. The question was obvious, what, if anything, could they do next? As concerned parents, had they exhausted the only options available to them?

Not knowing if it would do any good, they decided to write a letter to the editor in the local newspaper in order to share their story with the community. The idea was voted on and a letter was written and sent. Soon, another letter appeared in the paper agreeing that a book such as this should be replaced.

The positive response encouraged the concerned families. They began meeting regularly to discuss further plans and support one another. Before long, members of the community began attending the meetings and asked how they could help. They said, "Let's all write letters to the editor about this book." And a letter writing campaign began that lasted over the next six to nine months. The letters were counted over that period of time, and the number increased every week.

The issue continued to gather steam and reached a final conclusion one evening at the school board meeting. Even the state's major TV station was there to cover the story. The school board had had enough negative publicity and the decision was made. The book was removed, the teacher retired, and the school superintendent, who chaired the school board meeting, moved away to another state. All of this took place because one couple decided to do something in an effort to make a difference...and they did.

Each year, the local paper gave an end-of-the-year report of important news making events. Believe it or not, the newspaper named the book issue the number one story for that year.

We are now approaching the 2020 elections. They could very well make a huge difference in the direction America takes. More than ever, we need patriotic citizens to participate in ways that go beyond just giving money to a political party or candidate.

So, we encourage you to pick an issue and get involved. Join with friends and family members. If you belong to a church or community organization, encourage them to do the same. Make some plans, organize with a few others, and then take some action steps. How about starting with a letter writing campaign and see what happens? You now know, it worked before.

God bless.

Gary and Joan



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