

Letters

To the Editor:

I wish to thank the dozens of people who have approached me in support of my candidacy for the school board. They have responded to my call for a referendum for any future major construction at the school.

They have told me how refreshing it is that someone is expressing a view that has broken a "Roosevelt taboo." They tell me that they are feeling the pressure of our high taxes and they are concerned about the quality of education that our children are getting. They also tell me they are frustrated by not having their concerns addressed by the school board.

I have been asked why I am pushing so hard for a referendum. This is because the last time major renovations were needed to improve the school, we did not hear mention of a referendum. Instead, money was taken out of the operating budget and our taxes increased significantly. Now the school board is considering a lease-purchase arrangement for the express purpose of avoiding a referendum.

As a result of our campaign, I am happy to report that some members of the school board now say they are in favor of a referendum. I hope that I will be able to continue to move forward the concerns of the taxpayers and the children and I ask you to vote for me on Tuesday, April 30, from 2:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Roosevelt School.
—Pat Moser

To the Editor:

Some errors were printed in last month's **Borough Bulletin** which must be corrected:

Lee Allen's "Viewpoint" article

1. I did not threaten physical violence nor did I threaten Howard Prezant by using physical intimidation (unless he finds the mere presence of people who question his "wisdom" physically threatening). To suggest otherwise is ridiculous and untrue.

2. Lee states that the barely advertised, just-this-side-of-legal meeting—the type the current Council seems fond of holding—was planned so that there would be an opportunity provided for the public to discuss the \$600,000 "development" upgrade to the sewage treatment plant. Go back

and check the agenda, Lee. Where was the public portion? After noticing the large number of citizens present at the meeting, the Council decided to allow a time-limited public comment segment. Gee, thanks.

3. Lee also states that the purpose of the meeting was to consider all sewer rehabilitation options open to the Council. Why not consider allowing Roosevelt to accept a low-level radioactive waste site? Why not consider building a waste incinerator? Why not ask our engineers to prepare an environmental impact study of a domed stadium? Think of the economic benefits! You have to draw the line somewhere. Paying \$600,000 to make some developer's life easier is where many of us draw our line, and we did our best to let the Council know it at that wonderfully advertised "open" meeting.

4. I could rebut more of Lee's rewriting of history, but what the heck.

5. Abbie Hoffman is spelled with an "ie", not a "y".

Rose Murphy's Letter to the Editor

1. Contrary to what Rose said, the Council did not vote unanimously "no" to the \$600,000 development upgrade to the sewage treatment plant at the tremendously advertised "open" meeting. Instead, they asked the Borough engineer to study it further. Fortunately the Council realized that a significant part of Roosevelt would not or could not pay more than \$140/month for unnecessary water/sewer work several weeks later (*after* further, costly study). Frankly, I'm glad we all were at the meeting to make our feelings known.

2. Rose quotes me at great length under point number two of her letter. I challenge Rose to locate in any of my writings the words she attributes to me. It's a bit difficult to defend myself when it isn't even me I'm defending! I wonder what else I've said and done? Hmmmmmm, perhaps I'm "anti-school". I really hope Rose does a better job with facts during her tenure on the Council.

3. Rose also quotes me as saying "We must stop the internal feuding if we are ever to address any crisis." This quote is actually something I said, but the crucial missing context is in the next line from the quoted article: "The best way to prevent accusations of

"factionalism" or "political motivations" is to be absolutely sure that everyone has total access to the decision-making process. The conversational innuendoes, the secret meetings, the phone calls to a select "in-group" is not acting in the public trust." This is still true.

Some General Comments

I am saddened that the **Borough Bulletin** seems to have adopted an editorial policy of printing wild accusations and personal attacks without allowing the "attackee" a chance to respond to the article at the time it was printed. Most journals I write for provide an opportunity for rebuttal to ad hominem attacks before articles go to print (and wasn't this **Bulletin** policy in the past?). Most of this nonsense is pretty ludicrous by now, but the accusation of violence matters to me. I have worked hard in my personal and professional life to promote the ideals of pacifism; I condemn the use of force as a tool for human change. During the past month, I have felt compelled to greet people by saying "no, I don't hit!" because my commitment to non-violence runs deep.

I am also saddened that members of the Council choose to respond to criticisms of their actions by character assassination and personal ridicule. Having grown up in a political family, this level of human exchange only bothers me a little bit (and in fact I rather enjoy the label "professor of doom", as one anonymous letter has tagged me), but I do wish that Council members would answer the questions we ask instead of trying hard to ignore that there might be disagreements with the expensive plans they are formulating for our town. I also wish that the Council would stop pretending that our dislike for the closed methodology they have adopted as their operating procedure doesn't matter.

I believe it does matter, and there can be no excuse for the undermining of the principles designed into our republic. To complete the paragraph of the single, out-of-context quote of mine Rose Murphy got correct: "I fear for the future of open political discourse—in our town, our state, and in our country. Honesty has to begin at home." Where do you draw the line?

—Brad Garton