

A Dad's Word of Thanks to The San Leandro Police

Editor:

□ On Dec. 30, my sons, age 16 and 19, were stopped on Williams Street east of Doolittle Drive by the San Leandro police at approximately 2 p.m. They were suspected of “doing doughnuts” (smoking the vehicle’s tires while holding the brake down going in a circle) in a business complex parking lot.

□ I must note that my sons are black. Conversely, my sons were treated respectfully, professionally and firmly. They were not thrown to the ground, weapons pointed at them, or abused in any way.

□ The officers on the scene, Roselind, Kalsbek, Trujillo and Chinn chose to take a less formal approach to this situation, and did not tow their vehicle or issue a citation. Instead, they used a more humane and constructive approach and issued a stern warning.

□ This missive is my personal thanks to the officers aforementioned, not only for their excellent conduct in this encounter, but in representing the SLPD in setting the bar high. To those who believe the SLPD is the department of old, I can truly tell you times have really changed. Our tax dollars are being well spent.

—Efreem Ray Fleming, *San Leandro*

Calls Anti-Gun Letter-Writers 'Hypocritical Cranks'

Editor:

□ The Reverend Bernadel-Huey (*“Urges Letter-Writing Effort for Assault-Weapons’ Ban”*) and perennial embarrassment Vernon Burton (*“Is the NRA on the Right Side of the Gun Issue?”*) fulminate mightily against guns and the NRA in last week’s Times.

□ I wonder if they’re willing to match their big mouths with a little sign on their front yard that says: “We Believe In Gun Control. This House is Unarmed!”

□ We all know they won’t do it, and we all know why, so until such time as we see those signs Bernadel-Huey and Burton can be ignored as nothing more than a pair of hypocritical cranks.

—Allan Lindsay-O’Neal, *San Leandro*

Believes a Gun-Free Society Is the Solution to Gun Violence

Editor:

□ Let's get real. The only way to protect ourselves from gun violence is to get rid of the guns.

□ The suggested ways of stopping gun violence include background checks, increased mental help, reduced magazine size and swat teams in every school. Because there are over 300 million guns in the United States, these suggestions will not stop a mass killer.

□ If a mentally deranged person wants to get a gun there are plenty around. Most murders are not mass killings but one on one and there are some other steps we can take to reduce that number.

□ (1) Fifty percent of the people involved in violent crimes do not have a high school degree. Another 40 percent have no college hours. Based on these numbers, if high school students go on to college the murder rate will drop by 90 percent. Ending poverty and improving the schools will ensure that every student is ready for college.

□ (2) Another step we can take is to require an annual gun registration fee. This will reduce the number of guns in private hands.

□ (3) Killing has become entertainment in the movies, on television and in video games. Assigning an X-rated label on this type of entertainment would start to drive the killing-is-ok mentality from the nation. To stop the mass killings, America will have to create a gun free society.

□ The profile of a mass killer is so diverse it is almost impossible to know who the future killers are. To prevent another mass murder like the one that occurred at the Sandy Hook Elementary school in Conn. that killed 20 children and six adults, we need to repeal the Second Amendment. Another way to rid the country of guns would be to get a court ruling that only the militia has the right to bear arms, which I think is the correct interpretation of the 2nd Amendment.

□ We can become a gun free society if we focus more on what we are capable of and less on what we are afraid of.

—**Elie Parker**, *San Leandro*

Says Second Amendment Has Been Used to Abuse Power

Editor:

□ What happened in Newtown, Connecticut was a tragedy, just as it is in other cities such as

Oakland, Richmond and Chicago. The massacres in these cities prove there needs to be a ban on semi-automatic military-style assault rifles.

□ But the National Rifle Association and other gun rights' organizations are spreading fear and ignorance among the American people that banning these rifles will be an infringement on so-called law-abiding citizens, who claim it violates the Second Amendment.

□ In fact, history shows that the Second Amendment has been used to abuse power. For example, in California from the 1850s to the 1900s white settlers who called themselves law-abiding citizens massacred 90 percent of the California Indians who were standing in their way of their search for gold. People need to be aware when half of the people in this country who call themselves law-abiding abuse their power.

—**Billy Trice, Jr.**, *Oakland*

Another Reason to Switch to a Meatless Diet

Editor:

□ The flu epidemic has invaded 48 states, overwhelming medical facilities, exhausting vaccine supplies, and killing 29 children and thousands of seniors. Both the problem and solution to this disaster hinge on how we relate to animals raised for food.

□ Indeed, 61% of the 1,415 pathogens known to infect humans originate with animals. The more recent, contagious, and deadly viruses among these include Asian, dengue fever, Ebola, H5N1 (bird), HIV, SARS, West Nile, and yellow fever.

□ The pandemic “Spanish” flu of 1918, killed 20-50 million people worldwide, and the World Health Organization predicts more pandemics in the future.

□ Today's factory farms are virtual flu factories. Sick, crowded, highly stressed animals in contact with contaminated feces and urine provide ideal incubation media for viruses. As these microbes reach humans, they mutate to defeat the new host's immune system, then propagate by contact.

□ Each of us can help end animal farming and build up our own immune system against the flu by replacing animal products in our diet with vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.

□ These foods don't carry flu viruses, or government warning labels, are touted by every major health advocacy organization, and were the recommended fare in the Garden of Eden.

—**Dennis Roth**, *San Leandro*