53rd KZGN News Talking Points Editorial

Should the confederate flag be removed from the South Carolina state capitol grounds?

First, a couple comments about last Thursdays editorial titled: “Do you realize the city raised our sewer fees 50% last night?” It was an editorial analyzing the city voting to increase our sewer rates by 50%. A single family home went from $252 per year to $354 per year. Commercial rates went up 50%, as well. Larry wrote, “$152 increase on our tax bill for residential service. It sucks to pay for something I don't even use. It was never considered that there are some households that are not connected to the sewer.” Actually Larry, the city has acknowledged that not everyone is hooked up to the sewer. If your residence is not hooked up, then there would be no fee. I suggest you check your tax bill if you’re not hooked up. I know you live out in Ridgecrest Heights. So did I back in the 1980’s.

While I was living out there in the 1980’s, the city came through every street installing city sewer and tried to get everyone hooked up. I know I was hooked up and my septic removed. For those of you in Ridgecrest Heights, you may have gotten hooked up without paying attention. Also, Dorris asked about churches. You’re right. The table doesn’t show any church category. I’ll inquire with the city and see what they say. I suspect it might fall under the exempt category, but I don’t know for sure.

Now on to today’s editorial topic: Should the confederate flag be removed from the South Carolina state capitol grounds? We all know about the shootings that happened at the church. Since it was a hate crime, many people are strongly calling for the removal of the confederate flat from the state capitol grounds. South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley on Monday called on lawmakers to take down the confederate battle flag at the state capitol grounds, a week after a white gunman allegedly shot dead nine black worshipers at a historic church. The flag that has flown at the state house grounds in Columbia for a half century became a fresh focus of criticism after the Charleston church massacre. Federal authorities are investigating the attack as a hate crime and an act of terrorism by accused gunman Dylan Roof, 21, who posed with the flag in photos posted online. "It’s time to remove the flag from the capitol grounds," Haley, a republican, told a news conference in the state capital, about 100 miles from the shooting. "The flag, while an integral part of our past, does not represent the future of our great state." This story has provided some interesting news. The governor can order all flags at the capitol to be flown at half-mast or lowered all together. But, the governor cannot order the confederate flag to be lowered, only the state legislature has that authority. Pretty strange. So, the confederate flag has more protection than the American flag. I wonder what happens when the president orders all flags to half-mast? Is the flag lowered under his orders? The governor wants the legislature to vote and remove it completely before they leave on summer recess. Some have said they will go on vacation without voting. Well, the governor said she will use her authority to call them back into session to handle the issue if they try and leave. And she does have that authority. Well, what do you all think? Should it be removed? Sure, it represents a very difficult time in our country’s history. But it probably is time for them to move on. The war is over. Just as we always wind up friends to countries that were once our enemy through a war, the north and south are no longer enemies and friends. Should we forget about the war? Absolutely not. As a matter of fact, Shannon and I watched a documentary of the Gettysburg battle just Sunday evening. What a battle. 50,000 soldiers fell in that 3-day battle. It should never be forgotten.

I’ve got a personal story about how some in the south still feel temper against the north. About 10 years ago, when I still worked for the navy, i went to a meeting at Pax River. I had some spare time, so I went sightseeing. I went out to the tip of the peninsula that Pax is on.

At the tip of the peninsula were the remains of an old Civil War hospital. Stuck in the ground were two flags. One stars and stripes, and one confederate flag. I know the law states that the stars and stripes must always be the highest of any flag in the immediate area. Well, in this display, both flags were the same height. I should make it clear they were very small flags, about two feet high. Well, noticing the obvious error, I went over and pushed the confederate flag down into the ground just about an inch. Just so it was slightly lower than the stars and stripes. I just thought it was an oversight by who ever put the flags up. And I really didn’t think much of it, until later. That evening, as I sat with people that lived there, I told them what I did. A couple of them were very horrified that I had done that. They declared that I was lucky that I didn’t get shot. I was stunned. I never even thought that doing what I did would offend anyone. I thought it was the right thing to do. After a lengthy dinner discussion, it seemed to me that the war might not be completely over for all southerners. But it should be. Even though the north technically won the war, no one really won. Mothers and daughters lost thousands and thousands of fathers and sons to the war. Everyone suffered. The people I was dining with agreed that maybe all should be set aside and everyone should move on. They declared, that there are die hard southerners that will never forget the war. But the war is over. It really is. So should the confederate flag stay flying in South Carolina? Due to the first amendment, I believe that if people want to fly it at their homes, they have a right to do so. So, nothing should infringe on that right. But as far as on the state capitol, it’s time to move on.

In conclusion, put the flag away as a state sponsored flag. However, do not infringe on the people’s 1st amendment right to fly it at their homes if they want to.

I’m Tom Wiknich, and that’s what I think. I’d like to know what you think. If you have any comments about this editorial, or would like to discuss or recommend a topic, I’d like to hear from you. Please email them to info@kzgn.net.