March Update re: 'Understanding & Combating Racism' & a little wisdom from Elmo!

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| |  | | --- | | **Bill Wynne** | | Attachments8:50 PM (58 minutes ago) |  |  |
| |  | | --- | | to Bill, bcc: me | | | |

To All Friends, Family, Colleagues... In the spirit of Leap Year, I'm jumping into March a few hours early!

With all the seemingly relentless onslaughts regarding our basic freedoms and rights including education, access to medical treatment, how we worship, diversity of family life, availability of books in schools and libraries, and many others, it’s refreshing to have the well-known Sesame Street character, Elmo, recently chime in to help ease our stress.

Elmo simply said and asked through social media: ***“Elmo is just checking in! How is everybody doing?.”***Thisbrought about thousands of heartfelt responses and overwhelmingly from adults ... please see <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2024/02/12/elmo-mental-health-social-media-therapy/72514147007/>

Elmo's goodwill sparked some additional thoughts about the importance of **Freedom**that I'd like to share.The principle of Freedom within Democracy refers to the fundamental rights and liberties that individuals possess within a democratic society. In a democratic system, citizens can participate in decision-making processes, express their opinions, assemble peacefully, and enjoy certain fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and the right to due process under the law.

WE CANNOT and SHOULD NOT TAKE THESE RIGHTS FOR GRANTED SINCE THEY ARE UNDER INCREASING THREAT OF BEING TAKEN AWAY. **Please see my latest blog post for more on Freedom ...**<https://www.wewynneauthor.com/2024/02/29/freedom-and-a-little-bit-of-elmo-wisdom/>

So, consider being “Elmo-like” within your own circle of friends… and with many of our basic rights and freedoms being assaulted, showing some compassion, kindness, and connection can go a long way in helping people weather their individual personal storms.

Elmo’s quote also reminded me personally about the importance of staying connected and building relationships; so, again my standing offer to any of you who would like to have a '1:1' conversation about my work … and in the spirit of ‘Elmo’, whatever else may be on your mind!

A brief **update on the Pines of Perinton**: at the 2/28 Perinton Town Board meeting, I made the following statement … *“Since the last Town Board meeting on Valentine’s Day, within the last week there has been much positive energy exhibited among all involved entities and at many levels to get many of the Pines of Perinton Renovation Project issues resolved or moving towards resolution.*

*There have also been key communications process improvements introduced among the residents thru the Pines Tenant Association (PTA), Winn Residential/Connected Communities, DiMarco Construction, their other contractors, as well as the Town of Perinton.*

*The goal is that the PTA and their allies move towards a multiple “WIN/WIN/WIN/WIN” (!) for Winn, its contractors, the Town, and most importantly for the Pines residents. All parties seem to agree that it’s in everyone’s best interest to “succeed” and be in HARMONY!”*

There was more to what I said and the struggle continues, but the Pines is now moving in the right direction. Also,I am very grateful and applaud the many of you who have participated and contributed to the various discussions about the Pines to finally have some positive movement. Please continue to stay tuned since there is still a long way to go … and your continued prayers are greatly appreciated.

Another update: Many thanks to those of you who have supported two of my friends, **Tiffany Porter and Alvin Mitchell**, in their respective Community work. They both suffer with what I refer to as 'Poverty Bandwidth' such that they need all the help they can get.

Here are some new giving opportunities for Tiffany and her **‘Being Black in the Burbs’** initiative (see <https://www.facebook.com/beingblackintheburbs/> ) include connections with website designers for a new Pines Tenant Association (PTA) website. Additionally, she suggests food and toiletries donations. And some of you have already attended and/or spoken at Perinton Town Board regarding the Pines and that’s another way to help. Tiffany’s website provides the contact information for reaching out to her on any of these possibilities or others you may have.

Regarding Alvin Mitchell’s **‘Alwayz For The Kidz’**program, Spring is coming and basketball will resume at Cobbs Hill Park where Alvin provides food and cooks for the youth there. Donations are welcomed and just contact me if interested. I have connected him with the Rochester Community Foundation and they are exploring ways to assist Alvin as well. He recently had a car donated to him by a very good friend of mine and has received gift cards too to help him regarding his food supplies at the Park. Lastly, he is wrapping up writing his resume to help him in his career search. So, he’s a very busy guy!

Three upcoming programs I will be presenting at are as follows:

* **March 14th, 6:30 – 8:00 PM** at Hipocampo Bookstore (638 South Ave., Rochester). I will be joined by another local author, John Strazzabosco. The program is titled *'Understanding, Combating, and Navigating Racism'*. For registration, please go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/understanding-combating-and-navigating-racism-tickets-850774558607>**.**Also, see the attached flyer suitable for posting, distribution, etc.
* **March 16th, 10:00 - 4:00 PM** at the Mount Irenaeus Franciscan Mountain Community (near Cuba, NY); It is titled *‘Transformation from Fear of Each Other to Becoming a Beloved Community.’* Registration is required so please go to <https://mountainonline.org/event/social-justice-meeting/> for more details or contact me directly.
* **April 23rd, 6:00 -7:00 PM** at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse (150 French Road, Pittsford) sponsored by their Justice and Care for Creation Committee. It will be a presentation on Racism (Hate) and its antidote Antiracism (Love).

Lastly as usual, some important, useful links for your reference this month:

* Exploring Race Group: <https://exploringracism.org/update-week-ending-02-24-2024/>
* 'The State of Poverty in Rochester': <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#label/Poverty+Info/FMfcgzGxRdxCHKwxflHkvPHxkZKxvKDr?compose=GTvVlcSBpDxzVPjMcBMWVsQpMbLKCDvGVlLKgjnNWJqTNdDsjVNlgqkMqHXMhrZJvcbZNcsxdFvrW&projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>
* CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ... <https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox?projector=1>
* A powerful Heineken Beer Commercial link ... <https://startswith.us/2024/02/21/how-does-this-heineken-beer-ad-reduce-toxic-polarization/?utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=campaign&utm_campaign=02212024&utm_content=btn&_kx=W-0U0RzseLBEi-2E0qVz4lteRokyc9FfWkIu-Bc8Gd8.TAzfUF>

Heather CoxRichardson, 'Letters from An American':

* <https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/p/february-19-2024?utm_source=post-email-title&publication_id=20533&post_id=141849821&utm_campaign=email-post-title&isFreemail=true&r=hzcbm&triedRedirect=true&utm_medium=email>
* <https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/p/february-20-2024?utm_source=post-email-title&publication_id=20533&post_id=141882420&utm_campaign=email-post-title&isFreemail=true&r=hzcbm&triedRedirect=true&utm_medium=email>
* <https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/p/february-22-2024?utm_source=post-email-title&publication_id=20533&post_id=141952527&utm_campaign=email-post-title&isFreemail=true&r=hzcbm&triedRedirect=true&utm_medium=email>

Robert Reich: <https://robertreich.substack.com/p/republican-theocracy?utm_source=post-email-title&publication_id=365422&post_id=141936293&utm_campaign=email-post-title&isFreemail=true&r=hzcbm&triedRedirect=true&utm_medium=email>

Fr. Richard Rohr: <https://email.cac.org/t/d-e-eldjde-tlkrtkjkyd-w/>

All the best in the coming month as we move towards the hope of Spring!

Peace … Bill

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