

Trib Talk

Jim Robertson

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“I’ve been a hard-core Mizzou fan for 48 years, and I’ll be extremely disappointed if Coach Earleywine gets fired. He’s been an excellent softball coach. Also, I think that the University of Missouri graduate assistants are employees and have every right and good reason to form a union so that they can get justice and fairness in the benefits that they deserve for the weight that they carry helping teach classes.”

“So, Missouri wants to raise taxes on cigarettes 60 cents a pack. Come on, somebody needs to get a grip. How many friends do you know who smoke anymore? I’m not a smoker, and the majority of my friends are not either. But yet they’re going to raise over \$300 million? Really? Somebody needs to get their head put on straight and come up with a fair tax like some that are already in place — for instance, gasoline, sales tax. Why should only smokers foot the bill?”

“According to a new advocacy group called for the Center for Immigration Studies, it now shows that illegal immigrants receive more in household benefits than regularly funded federal welfare benefits. How in the world did this ever happen? Why are they getting any benefits anyway? No wonder we’re so broke.”

Robertson replies: The CATO Institute, a Libertarian think tank, likened the CIS study to comparing “oranges to elephants.” A similar CATO study found poor immigrants were less likely to use federal benefits than poor natives.

“Call this sour grapes or not, but if the schools keep asking for more money again in a few years and this trend continues because Missouri Lottery and the government aren’t allocating enough money to the schools, then maybe we need a watchdog to oversee what’s really taking place here. There’s so much new construction going up in Columbia it’s hard to understand where all the revenue is going.”

“I keep reading about this drug lord ‘El Chapo.’ They keep talking about extraditing him to the United States. I think he’s serving almost a life sentence in a Mexican prison. Why did we need to bring him to our prison? Let the Mexicans pay for him.”

“I remember as a child, my older sister and her husband and son — we would load up and we would go to the drive-in in Overland. It was a nice, cool night, and we’d be sitting there eating our popcorn, and sitting right next to us was Stanley Davis Jr. eating his popcorn and watching the movie. Tonight was just a nice cool night, and it reminded me of that.”

“I just saw on the television news that the Columbia Public Schools teachers will be getting raises, custodians will be getting raises and lunch room people will be getting raises. I have a special-needs child, and my special-needs child works with a para-professional every day. That person is with my child the entire time my child is at school. I did not see that para-professionals will be getting raises. I’m hoping that they are because that person works harder than anybody I know to make sure that my student has a successful day.”

Robertson replies: Michelle Baumstark, the district’s communications director, said all employee groups are included. You can find salary schedules for next year at the district’s website, <http://cpsk12.schoolwires.net>.

“If a girl uses the boys’ bathroom, does she have to stand up to use the urinal?”