



ROSSMOOR NEWS

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

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Republican Perspective

By John Littig

The Me Generation

This Thanksgiving-related column originally was published Feb. 8, 2012. It echoes the celebration-of-self discussed in the Nov. 13, 2013 column, “Only One Birthday per Month.”

To get a jump on Black Friday, Target management decided its stores would open at midnight on Thanksgiving. Many other large nationwide retailers (such as Macy’s, Best Buy, Gap, Kohls, etc.) also planned midnight openings. Toys R Us and Walmart planned even earlier openings on Thanksgiving Day, and K-Mart has been open on turkey day for years.

Anthony, age 29, works in a Target store in Omaha. Anthony thought this midnight opening was a lousy idea. So he started an online petition calling on Target to return to a 5 a.m. Friday opening. Apparently Anthony got almost 200,000 signatures.

Setting aside the issue of whether a midnight opening is a good or bad idea, let’s consider Anthony’s plea that “A full holiday with family is not for the elite of this nation - all Americans should be able to break bread with loved ones and get a good night’s rest on Thanksgiving.”

Oh, really?

It seems that Anthony was not the only American who had to work that day. Hospitals and other health care facilities were staffed with doctors, nurses, aides and support personnel. Firefighters, police, EMTs, 911 operators and other emergency workers were on the job. Prison guards continued to make their rounds. Pilots did not stop flying airliners; cabin attendants and ground crew such as gate agents and baggage handlers also showed up. Cruise ships and commercial shipping continued on their way. Bus and taxi drivers; hotel desk workers and maids; chefs, waiters and busboys; gas station attendants - all on the job. Here in Rossmoor, the entry gate was staffed, newspapers were delivered, and the trash was even collected on Thanksgiving Day.

And then there's the military. Perhaps Anthony missed it, but our warships sailed, our warplanes flew, and our troops continued on their missions. The Taliban probably didn't stop for a Thanksgiving feast with loved ones either.

Anthony's declaration is emblematic of the "me generation." They are victims of the self-esteem movement. They do not recognize that retailers, not their employees, set store hours; that regents, not students, set tuition rates; that there is a law against trespassing; that stop signs apply to bicycles too; that texting while driving has consequences; and that we all have to stand in line.

Jean Twenge, Ph.D., writes "Generation Me has never known a world that put duty before self and believes that the needs of the individual should come first."

Anthony is a product of that culture. Unfortunately, he is not alone; thousands of other self-esteemers signed his petition.

Anthony's co-worker Seth spoke of the Thanksgiving Day work schedule: "If I'm at work almost the entire day, I have nothing to give thanks for."

Now that's an astounding statement, isn't it? Isn't exactly the opposite true? Anthony and Seth do, in fact, have something to be thankful for. They should give thanks that they have jobs! There are 13.9 million unemployed in America. Many of them would likely jump at the chance for a job at Target. Even on Thanksgiving.

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