



# ROSSMOOR NEWS

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

[Print Story](#)

## Republican Perspective

*By John Littig*

### It's Just a Camel

Just when you think you've heard the last word in politically correct silliness, along comes something like this.

The Residence Hall Association at Minnesota's St. Thomas University planned an event to celebrate the conclusion of final exams. Central to that event would be the appearance on campus of a real live camel.

The inspiration for the use of the camel was the GEICO TV ad, in which a camel walks through an office asking what day it is. When one of the office workers finally admits that "It's hump day," the camel whoops with delight. It's a cute ad.

The RHA organizers called their event "Hump Day." They would bring the camel to their celebration, the students would get to see the camel and take selfies with the camel, and everyone would be happy that exams were over. So that seems like a pretty tame and innocent idea.

Well, not so fast. Some students declared that the presence of the camel would be offensive and degrading to Middle Eastern cultures. St. Thomas is a small school where almost all the students are Catholic. It's not clear whether there are any Middle Eastern cultures represented on campus or whether the protesting students were referring to Middle Eastern cultures elsewhere.

This particular camel was locally owned and trained for group events. Nonetheless, some of the protesting students also opined that the event would be disrespectful to animals.

In December, the RHA had brought a reindeer to a campus celebration. There had been no protests. Apparently the presence of the reindeer was not deemed culturally insensitive to Laplanders. So with this precedent, perhaps Hump Day with the camel would be OK.

Students angered and dismayed by the anti-camel protest pointed out that there is nothing about a camel that "degrades ... our view of Middle Eastern cultures." They also added that images of camels are used in many contexts, including cigarette advertising and, of course, nativity scenes. They scoffed at the stupidity of the protest and called the protestors killjoys.

One tweet offered: "Hopefully this story will be the straw that broke the camel's back for hypersensitivity on college campuses." Another observed: "People wanted to see the camel because it looks cool and because of a pop-culture reference (the GEICO ad) in no way relating to Middle Eastern culture."

So anyone with a grain of sense would discount the protest as foolish - maybe even a prank - and proceed with Hump Day as planned, right? Nope.

The RHA cancelled its own event, in part saying "... this program is dividing people and would make for an uncomfortable and possibly unsafe environment for everyone attending ... ." And so on, and so on.

It's unlikely that many Americans beyond St. Paul and its immediate environs had previously heard of the University of St. Thomas. But this story has made it onto TV news, the national print media and, of course, the Internet. An unfortunate notoriety.

The expression "hump day" commonly refers to Wednesday, but in this context it meant completion of a difficult hurdle - final exams. The RHA tried to take advantage of GEICO's popular ad as the theme for their end-of-exams celebration. Instead, unfortunately, they have probably established a new world's record for the absurdity of political correctness.