

LETTERS

School, alcohol don't mix

Editor: In the Nov. 4 *Times* I was alarmed to learn that Clearwater's Planning and Zoning Board recommended a variance that would permit the sale of alcohol directly across the street from Clearwater High School. This proposed location is in full and direct view from the front lawn and main entrance of the school. Only the width of Hercules Avenue lies between the two.

The zoning board's approval now sends the issue to the City Commission on Thursday.

Clearwater High School's Advisory Council is unanimously opposed to the variance. I'm sure the City Commission also has the wisdom to vote "no" on this issue. Our teachers, students, schools and school boards already have overwhelming problems imposed upon them. Let us all give them our positive support.

Nelson C. Vogel
Clearwater

Editor: Re: "Store gets variance to sell alcohol across from high school," Nov. 4.

It is unfortunate that the *Times* reporter did not report the whole story. This story misleads one to believe that the Clearwater Planning and Zoning Board approves of a liquor store near Clearwater High School.

Concerns with "distance separation" such as this one are not part of the criteria for the Planning and Zoning Board to review. The Planning and Zoning Board was required to consider traffic flow, parking, noise and such in granting a variance. Based on the criteria they must use, there was no legal reason to deny the variance.

"Distance separation" will be reviewed by the Clearwater City Commission on Thursday. I certainly expect commissioners will use sound judgment and deny the Walgreens request for a variance.

Paula Shur
Clearwater

Debate over Scientology continues

Editor: The much publicized IRS rulings do not bestow credibility or legitimacy to Scientology. The IRS rulings cannot rewrite history or wipe the slate clean for this most destructive cult.

Never forget that this cult committed what is, in my opinion, the greatest conspiracy against the government — crimes for which its top leadership went to jail. Never forget that this cult occupied Clearwater with secret military-style orders. And never forget the cult's infamous "fair game" policy, which says anyone declared to be their enemy may be tricked, sued, lied to or destroyed.

The May 6, 1991, issue of *Time* magazine, in the cover story entitled "Scientology, the Cult of Greed," reported that it spends about \$20-million

annually on litigation, employing 100 lawyers with 71 active suits against the IRS alone.

I believe that a suit by Scientologists charging me with violating the Florida hate crime statutes was a political action designed to discredit me and defeat me in my campaign for public office. Last September, the district court of appeals affirmed a lower court ruling granting a motion to strike an amended complaint as a sham pleading. I am unaware of any media reporting of this ruling:

It is time to ask the Scientologists for their master plan. I am alarmed by comments that the IRS rulings now make it possible to expand. We must insist on a Development of Regional Impact study before plans for the new facilities on N Fort Harrison Avenue are approved.

The Clearwater City Commission should be commended for its courageous decision to appeal the court ruling on the charitable solicitations ordinance. Our city officials need your strong support. Let them know how you feel about what has happened to Clearwater and our quality of life.

Gabe Cazares
Clearwater

Editor: For the life of me, I cannot understand why people (including the media) continue to pick on the Scientologists. Admittedly, their lifestyle is, to say the least, odd and bizarre, but I can think of half a dozen religious organizations and religious cults that are even more bizarre than Scientology.

One of the largest of these puts on a ceremony that only Hollywood can equal or surpass, where strange men in red dresses swing smoking lamps, place pieces of bread on worshipers' tongues and once a year daub ashes on their worshipers' foreheads. Yet, no one picks on them.

This is supposed to be normal?

By comparison, Scientologists, in their smart summer uniforms and military haircuts, look like knights in shining armor and much saner. If we have to live with wacky religions, why differentiate? Why single out Scientology for attack?

Why not take them all to task?

Victor St. John
Clearwater