

Letter to Courier Standard Enterprise June 17, 2010

Dear Editor

I have just read the article written by Robert E Smith in the May 27th issue. The topic was church assessment. One statement Mr. Smith included in the article read as follows: "the issue is a profound one for the community. Amish families hold religious service in their homes as do some Christian groups". I'm sure my Amish friends will not reply to this statement however in defense of accuracy I will take the liberty to do so. If this is to imply that the Amish are not Christians it is a grievous error. Our Amish neighbors are about the most Christian people I have ever had the pleasure to know.

The assessment situation also needs clarification. Often people say to me: "The Amish do not pay taxes." They not only pay land taxes but help to finance our schools through school taxes, even though they do not benefit from them. I learned from a conversation with Leigh Anne Louckes, assessor for both the towns of Palatine and St Johnsville, that the Amish have never requested religious exemptions for their property because they have charge services there.

My purpose in making this reply is an effort to keep accurate information before all of the taxpayers and quell rumors before they circulate.

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