

## **ROGER C. NAGEL: Stay the course: City needs educated work force**

**Guest column | Posted: Sunday, August 18, 2013 12:00 am**

Many years ago, one of history's most influential and creative writers authored a widely popular book titled "The Screwtape Letters."

In this dialogue between good and evil, C.S. Lewis humorously applied the power of reverse psychology and satire to raise the reader's awareness of basic human nature, the culture of his day and its tendency to misbehave.

Much is the same with the current leaders of our city council.

We all know these city officials are loyal taxpayers hoping to improve the quality of lives for the citizens of our community. We know by their outspoken conservative values that they do not believe in bigger government, its power to corrupt or the burden of taxes on its citizens. We know these fiscally conservative thinkers realize the best path to better government is prosperity, because it is from prosperity that revenues can be raised fairly, to fund a just and prudent government.

So, just what are they up to?

By threatening to do the very thing they oppose so much, seeking power, taking more, not less, and growing government, maybe these city leaders are simply coercing action from the community and its constituents to behave better.

If that's the case here, these councilors should be commended.

Is it possible that this election was intended to drive actions from UNM to honor its commitment to this community? Hopefully, because redirecting this funding to a natural and important part of government, public safety, in a manner such as this, can only be explained through reverse psychology.

Why, you ask? It's simple. Rio Rancho has wonderful public safety services. We get national attention for our quality of life and our cooperative spirit in solving difficult local problems of government budgets and economics. Will we need more public safety as our city grows? Yes, and through the prosperity that comes from better paying jobs and more employment opportunities, we can buy what we need, when we need it. We do not need to tax more, we need to earn more. Our councilors know this. So do taxpayers.

As an employer, taxpayer and concerned citizen let me encourage you to vote against reducing our tax for higher education on Tuesday.

The gross receipts tax for higher education was well debated during its day. The leaders of our community, at the time, knew how critical a well-educated workforce is to economic prosperity for all of its citizenry. A sizable majority of voters made this commitment not only for the long-term benefit of higher education and the community, but also for future employers who seek a well-educated work force. Employers that arrived here since that vote and those currently attracted to Rio Rancho deserve our commitment to education. Don't change that now.

This employer says "Do not give up on anything; just stay the course."

Vote "no" on Tuesday.

*(Roger C. Nagel, CPA, is owner of Nagel CPAs, LLC, in Rio Rancho.)*