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OPINIONS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Empty chair is reserved for voters

Tsk, tsks say the pundits about Clint Eastwood's gaffe at the Republican Convention. Actually, he did us a favor by letting the cat out of the bag. The crude empty-chair joke, meant to disrespect President Barack Obama, is also the true but carefully omitted message aimed at the rest of us, revealing the dark underbelly of Republican policies on the financial, military, health and social safety net aimed at the middle class and the poor.

Underneath all of the smiles, the red, white and blue balloons, and the "we're just like you" messages from the speakers at the convention, lie Mitt Romney's and Paul Ryan's fiscal and social policies that make a scorched earth of life and health and finances for all of us retirees, middle class and the working poor.

All except the narcissistic 1 percent. They are what's really off-color, crude, cruel, some even criminal. Thanks, Clint.

Janet B. Eigner
Santa Fe

Bill Stewart concludes his penetrating Sept. 1 column, "Romney, Ryan — and Eastwood?" about the Republican gathering in Tampa, Fla., with a bemused reference to "the bizarre performance of Clint Eastwood." Bizarre it certainly was.

But for those who watched the proceedings through Democratic eyes, Clint provided the most telling moment of the

convention when he recalled a memorable obscenity from Dick Cheney and gave an empty Obama chair what may turn out to be the best line of the entire campaign.

John F. Andrews
Santa Fe

Many kinds of immigrants

In Mitt Romney's acceptance speech, he spoke of America as a nation of immigrants. Maybe that's Romney's America, but that image of America denies the history of many friends and neighbors here in New Mexico. Should one consider the first Americans immigrants, even though they came from Asia thousands of years ago? They were following game and gathering plant foods, not escaping tyranny or looking for freedom. Alas, tyranny arrived for many Native Americans with those freedom-seekers from Europe.

What about all those folks brought here from Africa in bondage? They faced the tyranny of enslavement, their destiny to labor for the comfort and prosperity of those immigrants who came to America seeking a better life.

Many of us are descended from the immigrants Mr. Romney celebrates, but let's remember the facts of our history as we evaluate our present. Mr. Romney's America may be appealing; myths often are. Fortunately, we voters can remember

our history as we choose our leaders in November.

Donna J. Seifert
Santa Fe

Last president

Recently, Walter Reed Medical Center banned giving Bibles to wounded soldiers, but congressional pressure forced President Barack Obama to rescind the policy. Obama's misguidedness apparently cannot recall the First Amendment, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." George Washington, who instituted chaplains in our Army, knew, "Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle (1796)."

America, at its founding 99.8 percent Christian, has devolved 236 years later into atheism and depravity that threaten her continued existence. I can personally attest that there are no atheists in foxholes, and I am concerned that those who protested rather than fight alongside me will again vote for Obama, a man on his way to despotism and perhaps our last president.

Mike Young
Santa Fe