

Keep the “Griffin”

As many things are coming under fire in our society, Waterloo is no exception. The recent discussion of removal of the “Griffin” on the Waterloo Police Department’s patch, a patch I proudly wore for nearly eighteen years, appears on the chopping block. What concerns me with this possible removal and interpretation of the “Griffin,” since when can people impose their interpretation on what another person’s intended meaning is? This is also a problem plaguing society as a whole.

When an author, painter, or sculptor create their book, picture, or finished piece, it is their meaning that is implied to their creation. Their meaning matters, not what someone else thinks the meaning should be. The heritage of the “Griffin,” has been documented and discussed in other forums, so I will not be redundant. However, if you ever visit the Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington D.C., you see the lion proudly displayed throughout the grounds. And the eagle, one of our nation’s symbols, the two combined together represent the character of our nation’s law enforcement officers at all levels of government, especially those who have given their lives to defending our society.

Another example, the Bible. The Bible, as I believe, is God’s word. There are interpretations of God’s word, but it is still God’s word. The “Griffin,” is a griffin, not a dragon causing the police to violate other peoples’ rights. The “Griffin” is a symbol of Waterloo Police Department and their commitment to protecting the citizens of Waterloo, Iowa.

Yes, there are bad apples in the barrel. Law enforcement is no different from any other occupation. However, consider this: there are approximately 800,000 sworn law enforcement officers in the United States, policing to a population of over 330,000,000 citizens. Law enforcement officers comprise 0.24 percent of the population they serve. Add to this the millions of daily contacts between the police and the public and the stress imposed serving and protecting the public. They need our support, now more than ever, not condemnation.

Keep the “Griffin,” to so show public support of fine officers, past and present, of the Waterloo Police Department.

Sincerely,

Michael J. O’Connor