



The Xenia Institute
Transformation Through Dialogue



January Newsletter

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January Updates

Hello Friends of Xenia,

I hope this note finds you well and enjoying the first weeks of the new year and decade. We are in preparation mode at Xenia, and there are several things I want to make you aware of:

First, our fifth annual Sam Matthews Social Justice Award Banquet has been postponed to Thursday, Feb. 11 at 7 p.m. It will be held in the fellowship hall of First Christian Church and, as previously stated, will honor longtime Norman businessman Jim Agar for his volunteer work with Bridges (formerly known as Independent Living Services for Youth), namely his design and stewardship of the Bootstrap Scholarship Program. Tickets for the banquet are \$20 each; to purchase please email Paige Hoster, assistant to the executive director, at paige@xeniainstitute.org or call 405.321.8682.

Also, design work continues on a new Web site for The Xenia Institute.

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Who We Are

The Xenia Institute brings people together, creates a safe space for dialogue and transforms dialogue into action.



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Building Community Bridges

Jim Agar to receive Xenia Social Justice Award

The Xenia Institute's Sam Matthews Social Justice Award honoree has spent his life quietly building community bridges from one generation to the next.



Jim Agar has worked for many years raising funds and recruiting mentors for Bridges, formerly Independent Living Services for Youth, which provides financial assistance and other support for Norman high school students who live alone due to family crisis. [You can read more about Mr. Agar's life and work with Bridges in The Xenia Institute's Featured Articles.](#)

[The Xenia Institute's Featured Articles](#) provide in-depth and alternative looks at various topics in our society and how they affect us all. New articles are posted on the site regularly, and we invite readers to participate in the online, public discussion about the topics covered in each piece.

War of Words

Was Cheney lecturing Obama or delivering a just critique?

Bloggers and pundits earlier this month [debated the veracity of former Vice President Dick Cheney's recent criticism of the Obama Administration's handling of the attempted Christmas airline bombing.](#) Cheney accused Obama of ignoring the fact that "we're (the U.S.) at war" because "It doesn't fit with what seems to be the goal of his presidency — social transformation — the restructuring of American society." Were Cheney's words a fair assessment of the current wartime president, or a partisan attack? Xenia's News & Analysis section outlined the discussion, and provided space for that dialogue to continue.

Each weekday, [The Xenia Institute's News & Analysis](#) publishes aggregations of blog posts and columns that tackle the topics people are talking about and the issues our communities need to know about. [Read Xenia's News & Analysis section here.](#)



A Diverse Understanding

[Fox News journalist Brit Hume became the center of media discussion recently for his call for golf star Tiger Woods to switch religions from Buddhism to Christianity.](#) While many bloggers joined the conversation to critique Hume for his assessment of Buddhism and the mainstream media for its response to the story, [Xenia blogger Clint Collins challenged the commentators to broaden their understandings](#) of not just Buddhism and other religions of the pluralistic, multicultural world, but also to understand that Christianity itself holds within itself many diverse expressions.

[Read more Voices of Xenia blogs here.](#)