

# 'Conversations' will get you thinking and talking

By Kathryn Reed

I don't know if it has ever been easy for mixed generations to talk to one another. One thinks the other is too old to understand and the other is too young without any life experience to contribute.

But if the dialogue were more about having a conversation, a discussion, sharing, then perhaps there could be an exchange of ideas instead of a litany of criticisms that are often followed by rolled eyes.



"Conversations" by Bob Keller of Glenbrook is aptly titled. He wrote it for his grandchildren. Sometimes it's easier to read than it is to listen. It gives us more time to process what is being "said".

The first page of the book explains his intent: "I seek to raise questions and hope the reader will attempt to answer those questions for himself or herself. I do not seek to teach the subjects covered. I do not seek to convince the readers of a particular viewpoint. I do not seek agreement with me.

"I will have been successful if this book stimulates thought and discussion even if the result is complete disagreement with everything here. I will have failed if the reader is in complete agreement with me without having done any critical thinking and analysis."

The 222-page book is a fast and easy read. There are typos and grammatical errors that would need fixing if the book goes into another printing. But those can be overlooked because the

subject matter is more than compelling. ("Conversations" is available on Amazon.)

Not enough books today make us think without being preached to.

And while it is a quick read, it requires a certain amount of time in between chapters to contemplate what is being written. To get more out of this book I think it would have been better to read it in a book club setting or at the same time as someone else in order to have my own conversation.

What I was left with was wanting another chapter – really, another book. Keller said a second book isn't likely, but he's always open to conversations.

"From time to time, friends have asked me for a copy of the book. I sent them a copy and, if they had children above the preteen age, enough copies for them to share with those children," Keller told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I'm afraid they were concerned that my pitiful effort would destroy the frail and vulnerable faith of their children and, hence, wouldn't let them read it. It amused my atheist beliefs that they thought the efforts of their church and their own beliefs were not strong enough to be a complete answer to my comments on the subject. But so be it – not my responsibility to raise their children."