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LETTERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

More on the mayor

I was recently informed of a rather bizarre message that was posted by our town's mayor referencing the coronavirus. In a time where our community and country are encountering a dangerous disease and a potentially more dangerous streak of unreasonable and irrational panic, we need our leaders to set a better example. We need our leaders' words and actions to embody and encourage empathy, compassion, consideration, understanding and the need to be useful to one another.

Pompous and petty posts only perpetuate problematic predicaments. With our community still recovering from the trauma of the Camp Fire, emotionally reckless social media posts during yet another traumatic event only deepen our wounds and slow the healing our community so desperately desires.

Mr. Mayor, please publicly apologize to your constituents and rise up to be the leader we need and elected you to be.

Morgan Dietz
Chico

A call to action

Open letter to the Chico City Council and staff:

We can reasonably anticipate the intersection of two phenomena: widespread homelessness and the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the following suggestions are made with a view toward minimizing suffering and fatalities among the homeless:

1) The city should immediately deploy as many portable toilets and hand-sanitizing stations as possible. All restrooms should be open 24 hours, providing access to soap and water.

2) The homeless who "shelter in place" should be allowed to remain sheltered—especially in locations least visible to the public.

3) All enforcement of "social crime" violations should cease, along with arrests/jailing on infraction-generated failure-to-appear warrants. Policing should pivot to a focus on serious crime, welfare checks and health-oriented assessments only.

4) The homeless should be monitored for adequate caloric intake. Staple/survival foods should be delivered to the streets if needed.

Though providing services to the

homeless in various high-density facilities has been routine practice, dispersion in the public space is likely a more sensible approach. At very least, dispersion and self-sheltering/self-reliance should not be discouraged, either through lack of material support or law enforcement practices.

Patrick Newman
Chico

Help homeless seniors

I recently met Janet, a reasonably dressed, sober, fully gray-haired woman who appeared to be 60. She had all her belongings in a torn trash bag beside her. Her husband had recently passed away, and she was tired of being homeless.

We're so focused on COVID-19 that we may have forgotten about the uptick in hepatitis A outbreaks. As long as we keep housing and shelter on the back burner, our community has more than one disease to be concerned about.

What about the conditions that increase our vulnerability to outbreaks of diseases?

Tiny home villages have the best potential to house the most amount of people—with distancing—for the least amount of money, in the least amount of time.

If more of our seniors were housed this way, we would be more pandemic-resistant. Leaving so many seniors on the street—170 by last count—makes us more vulnerable to outbreaks of disease.

We have a shelter crisis! The city has land. Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT) has a plan.

If you really want a "clean and safe" Chico, help the city help CHAT start a tiny home village before next winter.

Charles Withuhn
Chico

Lock gate at Bear Hole

Re "Pay to play" (Newsline, by Ashiah Scharga, March 5):

The recent City Council decision to use the fees from parking and a grant to improve Upper Park Road seems like a good idea for emergency and fire personnel. As far as opening up the road to the end for the general public, it is not. I can see having vehicle access as it is Tuesday through Saturday, but the gate should remain locked above Bear Hole.

Upper Park used to have a live-ammunition shooting and

archery range. That seemed OK when Chico's population was under 30,000, but it's not with 100,000 or more people now living in the area. Anyone who has to deal with speeding, alcohol-related issues, broken bottles and trash knows this to be true.

Who will be there to police the area? Who will pick up the garbage along the creek? Maybe another fee, eh?

Steve Kasprzyk
Chico

'This insanity must end'

Much to the delight of his *Deliverance*, banjo-playing followers, Donald Trump pirated late President Ronald Reagan's successful 1980 campaign slogan: "Let's make America great again." Apparently sometime before 1980, America was a great place.

I'm sure Reagan wasn't talking about the 1930 stock market crash that led to then-President Herbert Hoover's Great Depression. How could Reagan call the attack on Pearl Harbor *great*? Was it the Korean War that saw thousands of American soldiers die? The disastrous Vietnam War?

Flash-forward to Sept. 11, 2001, and the attack on the World Trade Center, resulting in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars (which still linger), and then to Trump's "Great America" starting in 2016.

Trump has given huge tax cuts to his billionaire friends and corporations, resulting in the worst stock market crash since 1987. Trickle-down economics didn't work then, and it doesn't work now. Republicans are quick to blame the coronavirus crisis for resulting in the cancellation of MLB, NBA, MLS and the NCAA tournament, as well as the closure of Disneyland, numerous schools, churches, etc., but I beg to differ.

Why do these blind sheep follow this incompetent holding the Oval Office hostage—even to the edge of a cold civil war? This insanity must end. Vote.

Ray Estes
Redding

Fingers crossed

Hopefully President Trump is starting to realize that you can't B.S. a virus like you can the American people.

Steve Kennedy
Chico