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Two on the burned lands

Re "Climate exodus" (chico.newsreview.com):

Thank you for your coverage of the fires and their aftermath. It breaks my heart to see the devastation to people who have loved this area and to our wildlife—creatures large and small—who have suffered, too. That so many have left is understandable. Moving forward, we need informed policies to return our environment to safety and balance with nature.

Patricia Egan
Chico

I sat on a rock that had formerly been my garden and looked down at the pile of rubble that had once been my Paradise home. I raised three wonderful kids in that house, and now the remnants of 30 years of my life lay still and quiet while 10 buzzards circle overhead.

One by one, I recounted the thousand possessions I'd once shared my house with and recreated the stories of some of the more precious of the things I'd lost. Each one began with my wish to "own" such things; that is desire. From desire, I moved to acquisition; from there, I coursed to appreciation as I reveled in my relationship with each item.

Now, as I sit here on a rock, tears roll down my cheeks as I say farewell to desire, to appreciation, and finally just "good-bye"—now three times heavier than ever before. I look at the buzzards, hearing the unique sounds they make. Carrion—which in English translates into "carry on."

Jim Smith
Paradise

School praise

I'd like to thank the Chico Unified School District teachers, staff, administrators and Board of Trustees for providing my daughter with high-quality, in-person instruction for the past six months. In the time of a global health emergency, CUSD has struck a fine balance between the imperatives of preventing the spread of a deadly disease and providing students with appropriate education.

The a.m./p.m. model has allowed my daughter to be with teachers and classmates every single day. And, due to strict mask rules and class sizes at half the usual number, she has also remained at minimal risk for contracting COVID-19. During an outrageously turbulent time in our society, the a.m./p.m. model has allowed students to stay in a consistent routine that facilitates good sleeping, eating and homework patterns.

I'm thankful that my daughter will be able to keep this routine for the rest of the school year. Considering the conditions of living through a pandemic, I am profoundly grateful. CUSD's ability to reopen schools last October,

and to keep them open and safe, should be a source of pride for the whole community.

Betsy Clemente
Chico

Confederacy on my block

Those who fly the Confederate flag know its long history and display it with purpose and intention. It shows up at every white nationalist gathering in this country and at NASCAR race tracks (despite having been banned).

I can avoid those gatherings. But, when I see it in our community, when it's in my face, what do I do then? Do I walk past, careful not to let it bother me? Do I shield my children from seeing it or use it as an opportunity to teach them about racism? Do I engage the flag owner and try to appeal to some better angle I know does not exist? Do I confront the owner in some sort of protest?

I wage this war of options in my mind and finally give in to the fact that no matter what action I choose, I give up part of myself in the process. If I pass, I emasculate myself, while confrontation carries its own set of risky consequences. Sadly, I am left with the realization that it is easier for this person to be a racist than it is for me to deal with it.

Raymond Rodriguez
Corning

Gun-demic

I just read an editorial that indicated we just need to get used to mass shootings as this is simply an American cultural aspect of the broad freedoms we have in this country. It indicated gun violence is now in "epidemic" mode and is unlikely to slow down much in the future as Congress is not interested in doing much to stop it.

So, I thought, "Wait! This is America and we can overcome anything." What about COVID? We were exposed, found cures and vaccines, and in the meantime practiced social distancing and wore masks. Why not apply the same logic? Ask the drug companies to develop vaccines to quell the urge to go into a mall and kill a lot of shoppers and, in the meantime, require we all wear bulletproof vests and helmets when we go out of our houses to work, shop, recreate or attend entertainment/sporting events.

It seems pretty simple to me. Hey, Doug LaMalfa, what do you think?

Dean Carrier
Eureka

Write a letter

Tell us what you think in a letter to the editor. Send submissions of 200 or fewer words to cnrletters@newsreview.com. Deadline for June print publication is May 24.

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