

# OPINION

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## A VIEW ON TOURISM

# New efforts aim to grow Duluth's visitor base

The new year brings fresh opportunities to share our beautiful city with visitors from across the country and around the world! Visit Duluth is constantly exploring ways to expand our reach, grow the visitor base, and keep Duluth's third-largest industry, tourism, thriving.

Several new initiatives are being implemented to achieve these important goals.

2020 will see notable changes to the messaging and creative content featured at visitduluth.com and in marketing campaigns. A diversity and inclusion advisory group is being formed to ensure Visit Duluth presents an image and brand that truly reflects our city. We're seeking representation from a cross section of perspectives such as sensory-friendly, ADA, ethnic, cultural, and the LGBTQI community, to name a few examples. This exciting collaboration kicks off in February, and those interested in serving on the advisory group can contact sue@visitduluth.com.

After nearly six years, a complete website redesign is slated to take place this year. Suggestions and feedback from the advisory group will



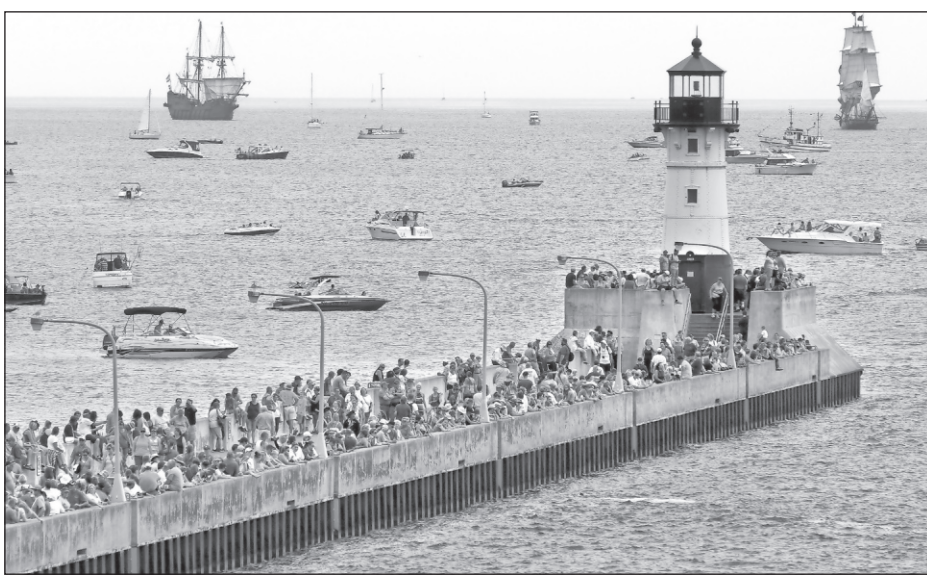
**ANNA TANSKI**

be incorporated into the new site, which is expected to roll out early fall.

The Visit Duluth Tourism Academy debuts this spring. Each month, team members will conduct a training session to define the role of Visit Duluth; outline the value tourism brings to our local economy; and create broader awareness by shining the spotlight on attractions, outdoor recreation, arts and culture, and all Duluth has to offer. This academy is free and open to everyone.

Workforce shortages are expected to be an issue well into the future. Visit Duluth, Soar Career Solutions, and Career Force are partnered on a pilot program specifically aimed at helping at-risk youth ages 16 to 24.

Duluth hotels will provide the candidates employment and on-the-job training and then work closely with case workers to overcome barriers to clear paths toward permanent employment opportunities. These employees join more



2016 News Tribune file photo

Thousands of visitors fill Canal Park and the Duluth ship canal when the tall ships visit in the summertime.

than 17,000 people working in the hospitality industry.

Even though Visit Duluth's efforts are primarily focused outside the city, we remain committed to providing valuable resources within our community. Each of these projects aligns with our mission to maximize the impact tourism has on Duluth, directly and indirectly.

2020 is shaping up to be one of the most intense presidential elections our country has seen. Many of Visit Duluth's top markets are located in high-profile battleground states, driving up media costs and creating challenges in

finding availability. Our preferred markets are in Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota.

Our community's lodging inventory continues to expand with the Fairfield Inn & Suites in the Miller Hill Mall Corridor slated to open this year. Trying to keep pace with the increasing number of hotels means stretching limited resources to expand the visitor base and absorb additional rooms.

Thankfully, 66% of visitors come from the Twin Cities, where road construction is a way of life. Visit Duluth will proactively communicate updates regarding Superior

Street reconstruction, the Twin Ports Interchange Project, and other work that can significantly impact the visitor experience. Preparing people for some of the inevitable inconveniences and travel delays is a top priority.

Marketing campaigns will be customized to suit the demographic being reached. Birding, road trips, hand-crafted local retail, outdoor recreation, and our world-class craft beer scene are just a few of the themes we'll highlight to entice visitors to find their ultimate Duluth getaway.

Visit Duluth is approaching the new

## 2020 THE YEAR AHEAD

The News Tribune Opinion page again this year asked community leaders and area experts to gaze into their crystal balls and to share what 2020 might be bringing us.

Thursday, Dec. 26: City of Duluth

Friday, Dec. 27: St. Louis County

Saturday, Dec. 28: Duluth school district

Sunday, Dec. 29: Congress

Monday, Dec. 30: Minnesota Legislature

Tuesday, Dec. 31: The Economy

### TODAY: Tourism

Thursday, Jan. 2: Business

Friday, Jan. 3: Downtown Duluth

year with anxious optimism, striving to balance the challenges facing tourism with new opportunities for dynamic outreach and continued success.

Anna Tanski is president of Visit Duluth. She wrote this exclusively for the News Tribune at the request of the Opinion page.

## READERS' VIEWS

### Americans can save country with votes

It's the start of a new year and time to reflect on endings and beginnings.

Climate change is obvious, with earlier blizzards and frigid temps while other parts of the world are burning, erupting, and flooding.

Will anything ever be done about common-sense regulations for gun control? Or will we soon see the average Joe with an assault weapon strapped to his back? It seems almost daily there is a shooting of one type or another.

Will our democracy survive a group of Republicans who have taken an oath to President Donald Trump at the expense of the Constitution? Have we declined to being OK with a president who plays by his own rules and does not follow the rules of the Constitution? Has abusing power in the most powerful office in the world and refusing to obey subpoenas become normal? Has it become acceptable to call our FBI scum? Where are we headed?

These are unprecedented times.

I remember after President Barack Obama left office, he said, "Do not take for granted our systems of government and our way of life." It can change. Well folks, it's happening now, and it's up to the American people to save our country. Vote responsibly in November. As U.S. Rep. Elijah Cummings of Maryland said, "We are better than that."

**Alice Miller Maple**

### University spending priorities are wack

Our police officers, firefighters, teachers, and professors are paid approximately \$50,000 to \$70,000 per year, and our lifesaving doctors are paid maybe \$200,000 to \$300,000 per year. But the University of

Minnesota, with taxpayers' money, pays its football coach \$4.6 million per year with a 25% pay increase.

What is wrong with this scenario? Oh, and by the way, the University of Minnesota Duluth needs \$5.2 million to prevent staff layoffs and tuition increases. But the university system apparently can't afford to give UMD the money it needs.

Parents and UMD students would seem to have every reason to question this gross disparity: spending priorities!

**Ronald L. Johnson Saginaw**

### Limiting immigration the only answer

We with the Midwest Coalition to Reduce Immigration have been very pleased to see the News Tribune giving voice to so many concerned about this nation's immigration-fueled population growth. If allowed to continue, it promises nothing but declining quality of life for future generations of Americans and an environment beyond restoration.

It is beyond comprehension that so many people, especially our lawmakers in Washington, refuse to connect the dots between this growth and continuing press reports about worsening traffic congestion in many parts of the country, exploding classroom sizes, and crumbling infrastructure.

According to the American Farmland Trust, between 1992 and 2012, the U.S. lost more than 175 acres of farmland an hour, or about three acres per minute. Why haven't elected officials in position of power and influence taken notice of this very troubling trend that will not be reversed by sending schoolchildren out on Earth Day to "green up" their neighborhoods? Likewise, "smart growth," while sounding better than "bad/dumb growth," in the end

produces the same results.

The only practical and responsible way to prove sincere stewardship of this nation's natural beauty is to stabilize population growth — and that means sharply reducing immigration from the 1.2 million people annually that has existed since 1990.

Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson said it best: "It's phony to say, 'I'm for the environment but against limiting immigration.' It's just a fact that we can't take all the people who want to come here. And you don't have to be a racist to realize that."

**Dave Gorak La Valle, Wis.**

The writer is executive director of the Midwest Coalition to Reduce Immigration.

### Trump abuses the power of his office

President Donald Trump and his sons and daughter were caught using funds from a charitable organization to fund Trump's 2016 election. Trump was ordered by a court to pay \$2 million to other charitable organizations, which he did. A win-win for him if he can write it off on his taxes he never pays.

Trump and his merry men in the White House seemed to use any excuse they could to avoid testifying during the impeachment process. Trump used the power of being in office.

Oh, what a large web we weave when at first we try to deceive.

**Ellen Dumancas Duluth**

### Are name-callers who we want in charge?

Every 30 days or so this paper publishes letters from the same folks. These folks still seem to be in denial that President Donald Trump won. They come up with all sorts of theories to show that Hillary Clinton should have won. These people are Democrats from birth usually and get their talking points from their

unions, MSNBC, or the Democratic National Committee. They seem quick to label anyone who disagrees with them as having some sort of disease that ends with "phobic."

Of course they can do this, but it seems their energy would be better spent trying to get along with everyone instead of lashing out and name-calling. You can see these people disrupting rallies and destroying property. Ask yourself if this is the group you want to be in charge of this country.

**Jim Gerdes Sturgeon Lake**

### Calls to limit immigration are nothing new

The relentless immigration-driven Minnesota and U.S. population increases have resulted in overpopulation. It explains why ecosystems are failing and why the economy and resources of all kinds are floundering.

A Nov. 26 column in the News Tribune asked: "Can Minnesota sustain its population rise ... from 5.1 million to 7.25 million by 2050?" A quick answer is: Can you even imagine a Minneapolis with twice the population? A Duluth?

Population is nothing new; only now it's worse. All of the following have pushed to stop U.S. population growth: the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, a report from the Commission On

Population Growth and The American Future in 1972, the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform in 1995 and 1997 (importantly, one of its findings was that immigration most harmed America's disadvantaged, especially black Americans), and President Bill Clinton's Council on Sustainable Development in November 1998.

Further, the Sierra Club said in 1969: "The Sierra Club urges the people of the United States to abandon population growth as a pattern and goal, to commit themselves to limit the total population of the United States in order to achieve balance between population and resources, and to achieve a stable population no later than the year 1990."

The Sierra Club also said, in 1989: "Immigration to the U.S. should be no greater than that which will permit achievement of population stabilization in the U.S."

The call in the column in the News Tribune for a national dialogue and sustainable population policy was a good one. It was done 50 years ago and programs and recommendations designed to achieve a sustainable U.S. and Minnesota were proposed.

Next time you're parked on a freeway or witness a favorite place being bulldozed, think about this and its cause.

**Dell Erickson Minneapolis**

## Readers' Views and Local Views

Letters to the editor are a critical part of the community dialogue, and the News Tribune attempts to publish all letters of opinion meeting our requirements. Letters are limited to 300 words, must be the original work of the author and must be exclusive to the News Tribune. Letters are edited for style, space, accuracy and civility. Letter writers are limited to one published submission every 30 days. With rare exceptions, the News Tribune does not publish poetry; letters that are anonymous, libelous or attack other writers; consumer-complaint letters; thank-

you letters; or letters generated by political or special-interest campaigns. We will consider exclusive Local View columns of 600 words or fewer. Authors should possess unique insights, and their commentaries should demonstrate greater knowledge of their subject than letters. **Email submissions to:** letters@duluthnews.com. **Mail to:** Readers' Views, Duluth News Tribune, 424 W. First St., Duluth, MN 55802. **Fax to:** (218) 720-4120. Include a full name, address and daytime phone number. Only names and hometowns will be published.