

postscript

by Frances Edstrom, columnist, Winona Post

One-time cash won't solve child care problem

The Star Tribune article starts out, "More than a third of the early childhood teachers at Karin Swenson's Rochester child-care center have master's degrees in education — yet her staff earn an average of just \$14.66 an hour, without benefits." The focus of the article is a Minnesota legislature-proposed \$500-million infusion of grants and loans to child-care providers and assistance to low-income families who can't afford child care.

The high cost of child care is a problem created by the legislature long ago, about 40 years or so, when the state began cracking down on what was a cottage industry of friends, relatives and neighbors caring for the children of working parents.

Suddenly, counties hired social workers and others to police child care. Strict rules were put in place for in-home care and what used to be called "nursery schools." Suddenly, your friend who cared for your kids and your other friend's kids had to be licensed. Her family had to be fingerprinted for background studies. County personnel could drop in at any time. She had to write policies governing her "operation." And she had to take training every year to maintain her license.

The upshot of this was that in-home care by friends and neighbors was either discontinued or done covertly and illegally (my choice back then). Legal child care moved out of houses and into centers.

And in the process, child care became more expensive, so the

days were gone of paying your friend less than minimum wage, which she was happy with, because she could care for her own children at the same time, be at home, catch up on housework, watch her soaps while the kids napped, and get a start on dinner before you picked your kids up. Under the new regime, she was spending so much on state regulations, that she either wanted more money or just quit.

Child care became one of the most expensive parts of a family's budget, and often became the deciding factor in whether or not to have a child, or more children.

Now, parents who are making little more than minimum wage themselves are expected to help support education majors with master's degrees in child-care centers.

There's no way to go back in time. However, the child-care conundrum is not alone in having become impossible because of legislative mandates. Look at the cost of college, and trace that back to legislative interference.

Legislators should legislate from the brain, not the heart, and should take into consideration the cost to us mere mortals of what they dream up. A one-time \$500-million infusion into the child-care problem will not solve it, and will only look good on the legislator's re-election poster.



letters

CWD and the culling of deer in Winona County

From: Paul Klinger

I'm writing in response to the recent approval by the Winona County Board to cull the local deer herd.

Growing up as a young child, like many other Midwesterners, one of my favorite memories is of the days spent in the woods deer hunting, always waking up early to strategize our hunt with my grandfather, father, uncles, brothers, and cousins as we all eagerly awaited the opportunity to take part in this annual ritual. Not only was it the opportunity to hunt deer, but it offered the ability to bring all of us together at one time to do something that we truly enjoyed doing. Throughout the years, the hunting party slowly dwindled with the passing of family members and now is nothing more than a memory to hearken back to the old days. These days, rather than the extended family get together of my past, my deer hunting consists of the ever so cherished moments with my father and son. Whether we get to shoot a deer isn't as important anymore, as just being out in nature with the ones you love is the main reward. In saying that, it also isn't as much fun if you aren't seeing any deer.

This leads me to the recent discussion on CWD and the ongoing promotion of deer culling. The unfortunate reality of what is currently going on not only in Winona County, but also throughout Minnesota and other states, is in my belief, severely misguided. We are told in the media that CWD is an ever-increasing risk to our deer herd and those throughout the country. How do we know that this hasn't been around for the last 200 years and it is only a focus now due to better testing? Those that advocate for the culling of the deer state that there is a risk that CWD could transfer to humans and livestock. This statement comes with absolutely no proof of it being a possibility but rather is used as a scare tactic to legitimize their killing of the deer. If CWD was truly the risk that is being presented, why doesn't the DNR pick up every deer carcass from the side of our roads and highways to test them out? Instead, these deer are pushed to the side and allowed to decompose for months while other carnivorous animals feed on them. Shouldn't those animals then be "infected" as well? No one has been able to show the public that this is what is happening.

Let's talk about the culling process in general. Sharpshooters are allowed to set up over bait piles and shoot as many deer as they see fit. Many of these deer are does, which at this time of year have already been impregnated. So in reality, every doe that is shot is most likely killing two to three deer due to the death of the associated fetuses. A recent statement was made that they will target does, but even the most experienced hunters could be challenged in deciphering the difference between a doe and a buck that has recently dropped its antlers. We are also told that the goal is to minimize the amount of deer in an area that has had a positive test animal for CWD. This flies in the face of logic; are we to believe that deer don't migrate over many miles in to other areas? You can't simply shoot the local herd and expect that others won't move in to repopulate. So that being said, what is the DNR's ultimate goal? No one really knows, as they have done a horrendous job of establishing a consistent message that truly makes sense.

Ultimately, what is this all about? The supposed threat of CWD is already costing millions in lost revenue to those that sell hunting equipment and licenses, landowners that are losing out on land values, and the many others that are affected by this. Makes me wonder if it is all about the money. How much is the DNR being granted to do this? How much money do the insurance companies save by not having to pay out for crop damage or for car/deer accidents? Makes you wonder.

Be careful Winona. Today our deer herd and a longtime family ritual is under threat. What's next?

letters

The real story about Woodlawn

From: Tim Leahy
Superintendent at Woodlawn Cemetery

Every once in a great while you have to stand up for what you believe in and set the record straight. After reading the February 12, 2020, article on the Ecology to Guide Trail Design in the Winona Post newspaper, I feel that this article failed to depict an accurate picture of the events leading up to and occurring during the selective harvest at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Back in early 2019 Woodlawn Cemetery prepared and presented its harvest plans to the city of Winona. We had met with city officials several times to answer all of their questions, paid permit fees and prepared the necessary documents on how we were going to proceed with our plans to harvest trees from the terrace areas within the cemetery grounds. The main objective of the harvest was to open up the landscape canopy in the densest area of the woods for new growth to occur and provide for a healthier nature setting surrounding the cemetery.

Our final plan to begin this harvest was approved by the City Council. Thereafter we proceeded to execute our plans to harvest wood from the targeted terrace areas. The entire project was going to take roughly one year to complete by focusing on five planned zones to harvest. Our plans were to remove no more than 30 percent of forest canopy to avoid the appearance of a clear-cut operation. During the harvest the forestry company working on behalf of Woodlawn Cemetery had discovered numerous dense areas of

buckthorn within the terraces which also had to be removed to achieve a healthier forest. All of this took time to accomplish.

During the process of the harvest we had been contacted by and met with some of the city officials, including Carlos Espinosa, city planner, and John Howard, natural resource sustainability coordinator, to follow up on some complaints the city had received about this project. Wolfe Forestry arranged a time to meet with the representatives of the city and took them out to some of these terrace sites. Once again, we had to halt the harvest operation for a period of time to satisfy their concerns and address the problems on hand. This was in fall 2019.

Unfortunately, Woodlawn was hit by a tornado soon after this meeting and lost a number of trees, not to mention suffering other significant damages. Clean up from that catastrophe caused further delay and the harvest plan contract with Wolfe Forestry had expired. We are grateful for everyone who came out to give us a hand with the clean up including the firefighters and workers from the city of Winona. Currently there are no further harvest plans in place for Woodlawn Cemetery.

In the newspaper article in the Winona Post on February 12, 2020, Barr Engineering Senior Landscape Architect and Ecologist Fred Rozumalski reported his findings and claims to have been appalled on his findings at the cemetery. He asserted, "I understood it was to be selectively harvested. It was a clear cut [operation]." My only comment to Mr. Rozumalski is everyone is entitled to their own

opinion. Woodlawn has received a number of positive comments from people walking through the trails over the past year on the harvest which are completely contrary to Mr. Rozumalski's opinion on the work undertaken by Woodlawn.

Regarding monetary payments, back in 1984 the city of Winona was granted access to the terrace lands within Woodlawn Cemetery. The consideration for that easement was \$1 a year for a 10-year term. During that same time some local groups created hiking and biking trails for the general public to enjoy. Since the old easement agreement had expired long ago, the city and Woodlawn also recently worked to negotiate a new easement agreement. Woodlawn is being paid \$5,000 a year for the next 25 years plus have the assistance of city staff to help mow some of the terrace areas within the cemetery grounds because the city has the proper equipment to maintain these areas. Woodlawn is trying to avoid any personal injuries to our cemetery employees in maintaining the terrace areas. Both parties were in agreement with the terms of the new easement agreement which now allows everyone to move forward with the Bluffs Traverse Trails layout.

Woodlawn Cemetery is a historic and beautiful place in Winona. We are not in the business to tarnish our image or destroy the natural beauty surrounding the cemetery grounds. We are just trying to be good stewards of the land. This is a feeling that is sorely lacking from the February 12, 2020, newspaper article.

Say 'no' to corps' sand-dump plan at Latsch Island

From: Mary Reoh
Winona

I request that the city reverse its stance in favor of allowing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to use Latch Island as a sand dump. The community of Winona will be left deprived of the benefit and beauty of this natural place in a time when landscapes are becoming all the more sterile and featureless.

The city should be mindful that the proposed five-acre sand dump would destroy Winona's jewel on the river, which is fully visible from the newly renovated \$2.9-million Levee Park. On June 21, 2018, Frank Pomeroy, chairman of the Levee Park Committee, made a profound remark referring to the redesign of Levee Park, "The plan was really based on community." I have often

recalled his words when visiting the levee as I observed what great work can be done when "community" is the guiding word for important city-wide decisions.

Referencing the proposed sand dump, Winona Public Works Director Keith Nelson said, "... if it created more beach area people would like that." By definition a beach is "an area of sand that slopes down to water." If a 50-foot buffer of trees is indeed left, I don't see how it would even classify as a "beach."

When I think of a future without this wetland, it feels wrong. Destroying this currently premier birding area, where warblers rest on their way south or north or stop to build their nests because "it's perfect," means stealing from the communities of nature and Winona, as well as from the broader community who visit our uniquely beautiful city. Winona

shines during all seasons of the year. If Winona concedes to the corps' request, there will be no hiding of that hideous dump when fall and winter and early spring come. We will see it for most of the year. I might add that if the mayor supports this terrible idea, his legacy might well be having that sand dump named, "Peterson Mountain."

A sand dump on the very doorstep of our city is not the product of visionary individuals who dictate land use in the community's interest. Destroying this parcel because it will save the corps some trucking costs when other alternatives are available is not visionary. The city of Winona only has one chance to say no to the corps on this proposal. I ask that they remember Mr. Pomeroy's wise and guiding words, "The plan was really based on community."

Beware, be vigilant, be informed

From: Bitty Neitzel

Some of the states are not allowing anybody on the ballot to primary Trump this year — including Minnesota. How is this not just another form of voter suppression? What if there was a write-in candidate that was successful in getting more votes statewide? Would someone be able to declare the will of those voters invalid? Who would be the one to make that crucial decision? Would any of the people who voted for that person see this as "every vote

counts?"

Take a look back to 2016 in Wisconsin, when we were an important swing state and we had a few "insidious" things in play. Did that maybe change the outcome not only for our state but nationally? To this day we have a governor who cannot fully do his job because the opposing party is still in control. Between the time Evers was elected and the time he was sworn in, they passed a broad bill limiting his powers. But, these were the same powers these same people gave to the governor

when he was of their party. Right now the gerrymandering fight is still being kicked around in the courts — unknown when or even if it will ever be resolved. Now the push to purge 200,000+ voters from the rolls because "they might have moved" hasn't been resolved. So far they have failed at trying to put an end to any early voting and even same-day voter registration. Is this what voters are expected to call a "fair win" now? Be aware, be vigilant, and be informed!



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