

GUEST VIEW

We can't take water for granted

Cool, clear, water. Nothing compares with that most basic of human needs, the substance that comprises 55-60 percent of our bodies, the liquid that flows freely from our taps, flushes our toilets and cleanses our bodies. Water is the life-giving elixir we so easily take for granted, until it is gone.

The July 27, 2021, issue of Time magazine carried an article by José Andrés, a world-famous chef. He said, "As the climate crisis worsens, we need to address protecting and preserving our water resources with the same urgency as we have put into creating vaccines. We need to act like our lives are hanging in the balance — because they are."

We live in a region where water is abundant. Minnesota, the Land of 10,000 Lakes. However, we experienced a few years of below average precipitation and higher than normal summer temperatures. Last year was the worst. Our trees suffered and ponds evaporated. Lac LaBelle in Twin Lakes Township shrank far back from its usual shoreline. More abundant snow and rain came thus far this year, but our water is something we should never take for granted.

Andrés cites a report prepared by the intelligence community under the Department of Defense in 2012. The group assessed global water security and found that many countries, including our own, would not be able to keep up with demand by the year 2040 if we do not learn to manage our resources more effectively.

As the summer of 2022 unfolds, we can see that we are in trouble. The heat and drought conditions in the western third of the U.S. are spreading to the Midwest and South.

According to The Scientific American (2/15/22), the southwestern portion of the U.S. now suffers from what is classified as a "megadrought," the worst in 1,200 years. Researchers note that there is a possibility some of the western states may not recover in the near future, if ever, because climate change is driving the weather patterns. Some cities in California are exploring recycling wastewater to use as drinking water. (It's done regularly on the Space Station).

In 2014, I traveled to Tanzania, East Africa. It was a trip that opened my eyes to the gift of fresh water that we have always enjoyed. In the rural areas and villages there are no wells. River water contains parasites. We drank bottled water. The experience has stayed with me, and often when I draw a glass of water to drink, or leave the tap running unnecessarily, I am reminded to be more considerate of such a valuable resource.

Much can be done to preserve our clean water. We can recognize times where we waste water and pay attention to environmental challenges that pose threats to lakes, streams and groundwater. Our fresh water is our gold mine holding the lives of future generations in its grasp.

Perhaps Andrés sums it up best. "We need to stop damaging the resources we have, conserve what is left and find ways to live differently," he said. "Most importantly, we need to invest in one another — in communities that care for each other before disaster strikes, not just after the storm or the fire."

We have the caring communities in Carlton County and the resources. Let's work together to preserve it all.

Pine Knot News freelance writer Francy Chamblings is a retired English teacher and clinical psychologist who loves living in Carlton County.



FRANCY THAT
Francy Chamblings



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Life begins and ends with a heartbeat

As a pro-life supporter, I have been in many discussions and debates on the issue of abortion. There have been many points as to the rights of the mother and of the unborn baby, with some focus around the timing of an abortion during the pregnancy. I feel many questions are impossible to be answered until parties on both sides decide the question of "when does life begin," as this applies to our rights to life, freedom and pursuit of happiness.

I believe there is a scientific answer to the question in the fact that life does end when the heart no longer beats — therefore would not the opposite be scientifically true that at the least life begins at the first heartbeat? And if that is true, where does the heartbeat come from? I propose it comes from the beginning — where else but — conception."

Len Anderson
Mahtowa

Blaming current issues on Biden is silly

Recently I received in my mailbox a stamped envelope with no post office markings and no signature or return address, and inside a letter written to me. Obviously, the unknown [writer] knows my political opines or has read them in several printings. Because I can't respond to the unknown letter writer, I am writing an open letter in the newspaper, which I have the courage to sign.

In the letter the [writer] listed inflation, gas prices, groceries, poor schools, sexualizing little school children, killing babies in the womb on demand, open borders, fentanyl, gangs, drug cartels, carjackings ... almost to say if we again elect a Republican, this will all magically go away overnight.

The [writer] blames many of the above-mentioned items on President Biden, overlooking Russia's hacking into the Texas oil refineries or the war in Ukraine. Many of the problems the [writer] speaks of are happening worldwide, not only in the U.S.

The [writer] claims a Big Red Wave is coming, as claimed in the last election cycle. In some states

it did — however, we no longer have President Trump.

As an open-minded person not married to a political party, I use my privilege to vote for what is best for our country.

As we've all seen lately with the results of the Jan. 6 investigations, our last president is the cause of the current division and hate that the [writer] blames on Biden.

Tim Kaspari
Wrenshall

Sheriff comes to the rescue

During Wrong Days in Wright, my wife, Susan Nichols, was having trouble locking the door to the Senior Center. Sheriff Kelly Lake happened to be driving by, and Susan flagged her down. After a few minutes, she got the door locked.

I'm glad we didn't have a more serious need for her services, but very glad that she is the epitome of public service.

Thank you, Sheriff Kelly Lake!

Tom Nichols,
Eagle Township

Express yourself

Send your thoughts to: Email: news@PineKnotNews.com

Mail: Pine Knot News Editor, 122 Avenue C, Cloquet

Some writing rules

The Pine Knot News encourages readers to participate on these pages. Let your voice be heard by following these basic guidelines:

- Letters to the editor should be kept to under 300 words. Longer pieces could be considered for a guest commentary. Commentaries should be kept to around 600 words.

- If you write a guest commentary, be sure to include some background information and any expertise you may have to lend credibility to your piece.
- Items dealing with local issues will take first priority.
- Letters over the word limits will be edited at the discretion of the editor. That discretion could include allowing a piece to run long.
- Reader comments should be respectful.

- The editor reserves the right to edit for factuality, clarity, concision, grammar, newspaper style, libel and length.
- Letters and commentary must be original works by the author.
- Include your name with your address and phone number for verification purposes only. Only names and home cities will be published.
- No anonymous letters are allowed.

Publisher Pete Radosevich's Harry's Gang column is on hiatus as he runs for public office.