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LETTERS

It's time to face the reality of human extinction

The Daily Chronicle's "State of Change" series is too little too late to do anyone any good. Over the past several years the majority of politicians, businesses and the general public have known the facts of climate change. And that same majority has either denied or ignored the issue. The result is that within the lifetime of the children now attending our schools, civilization will have collapsed. Close upon that collapse will be the end of the human race as the dominant species on the planet.

Why the denial of this imminent catastrophe? Why this refusal to act in the face of the extinction of the human race? I believe that a good part of the denial is due to conditioning from the entertainment industry. Television and movies have conditioned the public to believe that the human race will exist centuries from now in a scientifically advanced civilization.

Starting in the 1960s with children's shows like "The Jetsons" and "Lost in Space" and continuing with the continuous string of "Star Trek" and "Star Wars" movies (among so many others), the population of the United States, and maybe the world, has been lulled into believing that the show is never going to end, and in fact that centuries from now it's all going to be even better.

Well, it's time for the adults in the room to turn off the TV or leave the cineplex and face the reality of human extinction.

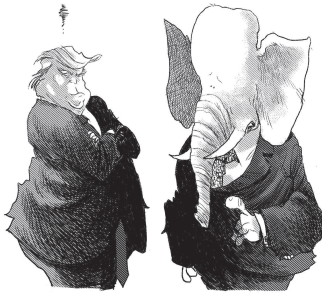
John Heilman
Bozeman

Wallner will be fantastic leader for city's future

It is an exciting time to vote for Bozeman City Commission because we have the opportunity to elect Michael Wallner. I am grateful to vote for Michael because he is a fantastic candidate.

With inaction at other levels of government, it is important to remember the great daily impact of our local government. Michael's priorities for Bozeman's City Commission tackle the challenges facing our country: climate change, quality food sources, tax policy, and gender equality. Voting for Michael Wallner to serve on the Bozeman City Commission is an important vote.

SHENEMAN THE STAR-LEDGER



"WE'RE GOING TO DO OUR BEST TO DEFEND YOU, BUT IF YOU GUYS COULD STOP CONFESSING TO YOUR CRIMES ON TV, THAT WOULD BE SUPER HELPFUL."

Michael's vision for Bozeman reflects my values because Michael will: (1) take steps encouraging our community to reach 100% reliance on clean and renewable energy by 2035; (2) utilize local government to improve our environment; (3) pursue policies to increase Bozeman's reliance on and access to local food sources; (4) create local tax relief by looking to a tourism tax solution; and (5) prioritize gender equality.

I am most impressed with Michael's endorsement of and commitment to the policies of Bozeman for CEDAW (Cities for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women). Gender equality is not typically a topic we associate with local government. But Michael joins a growing movement recognizing that we can achieve great social change on the local level.

Michael is a fantastic candidate, because he will be a fantastic commissioner.

Hillary Prugh Carls
Bozeman

Community must get a handle on underage drinking

We see it in the news all the time: another young adult's future comprised by alcohol. Whether it's academic failure, involvement with law enforcement, experience with violence, or sexual assault, the consequences of underage drinking for

young adults and the community at large are severe. While the rate of alcohol use is going down, the truth is alcohol remains the drug of choice among America's teenagers.

An underage drinking prevention event is being hosted by Alcohol and Drug Services of Gallatin County in collaboration with the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA). The focus is on improving the future of youth in Gallatin County, especially during Red Ribbon Week.

The event will be held Wednesday, Oct. 30, at the Bozeman City Hall Community Room, from 6-8 p.m. Refreshments will be provided.

The town hall's purpose is to raise awareness about the negative impacts on underage drinking, mobilize the community to be more active in reducing risk factors, and enhance protective factors surrounding our youth and in making healthy choices to reduce health and behavioral problems caused by underage drinking.

This event will bring together representatives including county commissioner, city of Bozeman deputy mayor, BPD chief of police, Bozeman School District administration, BPD school resource officer, chief youth probation officer, M.L.P. coordinator, Communities That Care coordinator and other leaders in our community facilitated by Shelly Johnson, ADSGC director.

Edward Sypinski
Bozeman

Philanthropy has played a major role in our parks

Based on a recent letter to the editor, a quote attributed to me in the Chronicle has apparently caused some confusion. In a story about the \$350,000 donation that I helped secure to rebuild the pavilion at Bogert Park, I said that philanthropy is an untapped resource.

When it comes to our local parks, philanthropy is certainly not an untapped resource. Those of us who have been involved in fundraising for Bozeman-area parks know that philanthropy has long been a vital component in leveraging and magnifying the city's recreational investments.

Organizations raising money to support the Story Mill Community Park, Bozeman Sports Park, Glen Lake Rotary Park, and our local ice rinks have raised tens of millions of dollars in generous contributions from local businesses and foundations, in addition to volunteer sweat equity.

I have first-hand knowledge of the power of philanthropy in funding parks. In a volunteer capacity, I've helped raise over \$1 million in funds to benefit local parks, dog parks and recreational climbing buildiers. I've been overwhelmed by the generosity of the Bozeman community in funding recreational amenities.

A close reading of the Chronicle article will reveal that I was actually referring to the additional potential of philanthropy to positively impact Bozeman's affordable housing crisis. Philanthropy can help preserve at-risk housing for our most vulnerable citizens, fund housing projects for families, veterans and seniors, and create a land bank for future affordable housing. We need additional mechanisms to effectively pair local philanthropic interests with projects in need of funding for area non-profits and low-income housing developers.

My intention was to point out that philanthropy needs to be a component of any comprehensive community-wide response to our affordable housing crisis. If your foundation or philanthropic organization wants to learn more, contact me at tcunningham@bozeman.net to begin the conversation.

Terry Cunningham
Bozeman

Electric bikes don't belong on all public trails

By DAVID TUCKER
Guest columnist

On our public lands, motorized electric bicycles (e-bikes) should be managed for what they are: motorized vehicles. This is not to say that the Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association (SWMBBA) opposes electric motorized bicycles. Indeed, many of our members own and ride e-bikes, but on motorized trails, of which there are many.

This became an issue in late August when Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt issued an order calling for increased recreational opportunities for e-bikes. This order directed all Interior land-management agencies to allow e-bikes on any trail where traditional bikes are allowed, notably in National Parks and on Bureau of Land Management land, such as Copper City.

According to the order, motorized e-bikes should be granted access to those non-mo-

torized trails, paths, and roads that are open to bicycles, but closed to vehicles, and the agencies were tasked with developing new management guidelines for enforcement. Immediately, the order was met with opposition—and a great deal of confusion.

While the order appeared to call for increased access, many mountain bikers held their breath, anticipating a backlash. They realized that their access was in fact under threat.

While that sounds counter-intuitive, consider the history of public-lands management and mountain-bike access in southwest Montana. Here, being associated with motorized recreation has been bad for human-powered cycling access. Most trails on public land in Montana are managed by the Forest Service, an agency not included in the directive because it is a division of the Department of Agriculture, but relevant nonetheless because of past management decisions related to mountain biking.

Time and again, mountain bikers have lost access to non-motorized Forest Service trail, and where they do enjoy access, they have had to struggle for the privilege. Advocates have spent nearly 40 years and a great deal of time and energy maintaining this access, often citing the human-powered nature of mountain bikes as a reason for inclusion on non-motorized trail. Indeed, mountain bikes do not have motors, so this argument makes sense.

The DOI order further complicates management, drawing a closer association between human-powered mountain bikes and motorized e-bikes, a link that threatens all mountain-bike access to Montana's federally managed public land. (In a press release following the DOI order, Region 1 of the Forest Service issued a statement defining e-bikes as motorized vehicles.)

For this reason, SWMBBA has concluded that motorized e-bikes should be managed as motorized vehicles. While there are different classes of e-bikes, all

with slightly different technology at work, one thing is common across all models—they all have motors. Motorized vehicles gaining access to non-motorized trail is dangerous for mountain bikers because if and when the Forest Service is forced to grapple with e-bike management, the agency could remove mountain bikers from all non-motorized trails, theoretically to streamline management.

Furthermore, e-bike-management decisions should be based on process, and decisions regarding their future use should be tied to the travel-planning process. Because the DOI issued this top-down order from Washington, D.C., the public was not involved and was not given an opportunity to comment. Also, the DOI did not conduct proper scientific studies of e-bike impacts on recreation resources or on wildlife. Consequently, we do not have enough information at our disposal to make sweeping conclusions about this new technology, how it should be managed, and how that manage-

ment should be implemented.

Again, SWMBBA is not against e-bikes. Appropriate opportunities for e-bike recreation already exist, and we look forward to expanding that opportunity with future trail projects. Of the seven Forest Service trailheads on the west side of the Bridger Mountains, five are already accessible to e-bikes. However, e-bike access to non-motorized trail could undo decades of advocacy work. SWMBBA's mission includes advocating for human-powered cycling, therefore we would be acting counter to our mission if we did anything other than oppose e-bike access to non-motorized trail.

For now, SWMBBA will continue to advocate for human-powered mountain biking, and encourage e-biking on motorized trails across our public lands.

David Tucker represents the Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association.

EDITORIAL POLICY
The Chronicle's opinion page is intended to acquaint readers with varying viewpoints on matters of public importance. Editorials represent the views of the Chronicle's editorial board; guest columns and letters to the editor reflect the opinions of the writers.

LETTER POLICY
To enhance the public discussion on issues, the Chronicle encourages letters from our readers. Letters should be no more than 300 words and must include the writer's first and last name (no initials), home address and daytime phone number. Addresses and phone numbers may be used for verification but will not be published. Letters may be edited for grammar, taste, brevity and libel. Thank-you letters, letters in poetic style or dominated by scripture quotations and those written by students as class assignments will not be published. We will also not knowingly print letters sent to other publications. Letters may be mailed to the editor at the Bozeman Daily Chronicle, 2820 W. College, Bozeman, 59715, or by e-mail to citydesk@dailychronicle.com.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION
Should county elections be nonpartisan?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION
Do you approve of the U.S. House of Representatives conducting an impeachment inquiry into President Trump?

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