

Letters

GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

Neighbourhood all in eye of the beholder

To the editor:
 Re: 'Beautiful place to live' loses glow, Jan. 15 Kelowna Capital News.
 We have been residents of Thompson Road for the past 31 years and these are a few of the things we have witnessed:

- we have seen people move in and be welcomed to our neighbourhood
- we have seen babies born and people grow old
- we have seen neighbours come together in difficult times to help each other
- we have seen families grow, with children going to school, graduating and moving on

- we have seen neighbours move away but still return to visit all the time
- we have seen celebrations, weddings, neighbourhood parties and barbecues
- we have seen people of all ages walking up and down our street with their families and pets
- we have seen our own children grow up here, move on to start their own families and still return to the place they call home.

Things we have not witnessed:

- we have not seen multitudes of drug deals
- we have not seen excessive drug houses

- we have not seen an abundance of thefts
- we have not seen constant speeders.

All neighbourhoods have good and bad qualities to them—some even have the odd kook or two, but that makes them interesting!

If all you look for is the bad then that is all that you will see. If you look around you for the wonders of your neighbourhood, you will find them for they are there all around you.

We count ourselves lucky to be living in one of the most beautiful neighbourhoods in Kelowna.

Dick & Brenda Auclair, Kelowna

Regarding pot use while in health care

Open letter to Hon. Dr. Jane Philpott and Hon. Dr. Terry Lake:
 The upcoming meeting of health ministers in Vancouver supporting collaboration and co-operation between levels of government prompts me to bring forward a current problem of some seriousness and urgency. Although I am sure your agenda is set and covers many issues of importance to Canadians, I would like to use a local example to illuminate the question posed at the outset of your upcoming summit: How can provincial authorities and federal regulators work together to better effect?

If an individual has the legal right to use medical marijuana and, of necessity, lives in a government facility, how can various authorities work in concert to accommodate this patient? At present there is stonewalling and finger-pointing to suggest the 'other' authority is responsible for the failure to provide shelter and assistance. Perhaps it is naively to believe that those charged with caring for people in these circumstances should do their best to find solutions rather than put their energies into blaming the 'other.'? If there are, in fact, legalities that prevent a patient from gaining access to their

medicine in what is supposedly a fair and compassionate system, then the inescapable conclusion must be that further, improved co-operation is desperately needed.

I would like to conclude by noting that I do not pose this question as a pot advocate, but rather as a people advocate. I applaud the revived efforts of jurisdictions to work collaboratively; and I refuse to believe that access to medical marijuana is only possible for those with financial resources to be cared for in their own homes.

Mary Weston, Kelowna

OBWB urges feds to stop mussel spread

Open letter to Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness; Marc Garneau, Minister of Transport; Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change; Hunter Tootoo, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard:
 Re: Urgent need to prevent invasive mussels from entering Pacific Northwest.
 The Okanagan Basin Water Board (OBWB) was instituted in 1970 as a collaboration of the three Okanagan regional districts to provide leadership on water issues spanning the valley. Since the last electoral boundary adjustment, our basin is represented in four separate federal ridings. The OBWB undertakes strategic activities at the basin scale for long-term sustainable water supplies. We have worked together with senior governments on many projects and programs throughout our 45 year history.
 We are extremely concerned about the need for action to prevent invasive zebra and quagga mussels (dresseinids) from entering the Pacific Northwest, B.C., and the Okanagan in particular which is considered to be at high-risk and is a primary destination for tourism and most in-land watercraft travel in Western Canada. An infestation could irrevocably harm our environment, economy, and way of life. The mussels would impact every water intake, outfall, boat and dock in our lakes, and all other inland infrastructure.
 Of special concern in B.C. is the threat to hydroelectric facilities, agricultural production, tourism and maintaining Pacific salmon species. It is estimated that an invasion of zebra and quagga mussels in the Pacific Northwest could cost \$5 billion per year. The Pacific Northwest Economic Region 1 has recently called for an additional \$20 million from all partners annually to adequately protect the region from these mussels, with the ultimate effect being the protection from many other types of invasive species as well. 1 The Pacific

Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) is a statutory body which includes political/legislative representation from B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Yukon and Northwest Territories, Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Washington, <http://www.pnwer.org/>.
 Over the past several years, federal, provincial, private sector and non-profit partners have taken great strides to improve legislation, increase public awareness and monitor for the invasion of these devastating species. However, the discovery of these mussels in Lake Winnipeg in 2013, including the failed attempt to contain and eradicate them, and the discovery this past fall in Cedar Lake, Manitoba, shows that the current systems in place to prevent the spread of these species are still inadequate.
 The Okanagan Basin Water Board recognizes the federal government's announcement in June 2015, regarding legislation to prevent the spread of invasive species. However, more decisive action is needed to help protect Western Canada from the spread of zebra and quagga mussels through the following federal actions:

1. Provide training and appropriate resources to CBSA to ensure agents can inspect and stop mussel infested watercraft from entering Canada.
2. Establish full-time seasonal inspection stations at major provincial crossings in Banff and Jasper National Parks to protect the Columbia and Fraser River systems and their Pacific salmon populations.
3. Fully engage in the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region Invasive Species Working Group to help implement the recommendations in the framework for Advancing a Regional Defense Against Dresseinids in the Pacific Northwest.
4. Work with and provide funding to the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba for containment of existing infestations at source waters.
5. Work with and provide funding to

the provinces of Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia to assist in the implementation of a coordinated inspection plan for all remaining uninfested areas.
 We applaud the Government of Canada's stated commitment to provide much needed infrastructure improvement for Canadian communities. While we support this investment, particularly in the area of water supply and quality improvement infrastructure, the cost of necessary future investments in retrofitting and maintenance can be greatly reduced by preventing the spread of invasive zebra and quagga mussels.
 We urge that you give this matter high priority in your ministries.

Doug Findlater, chair
 Okanagan Basin Water Board

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