

Community Comment  
September 13, 2013  
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This is not a Friday Fishwrap in the truest sense of the word. I have three issues that are timely and important.

This last weekend some very disturbing news broke in the Arcata and Manila area. The news was that a man and women had used a crossbow and shot two people. All we seemed to get in the way of news was that they killed one man and wounded another. They took off on bicycles and headed into the woods in the dunes. At first it seemed a random act. With the couple at large, no one knew what to do. It was suggested that we should stay out of the community forest until we knew more. Come to find out it was not exactly random. They were transients and they attacked two people in a homeless encampment for stealing their belongings.

Here's the take-a-way. These transients are not harmless. It shouldn't take an incident like this to make the point. It seems the homeless population can be summed up in three areas. The truly homeless; those down on their luck that would like a helping hand to get back to an independent and responsible life. The mentally ill or disabled; those that can't get along without assistance. Transients; those that are drawn to this county because of the services and goodhearted people that help them. I talk to a lot of these transients in Arcata and they freely admit that they make a living begging for money and sponge off those that feel sorry for them. I for one am happy and feel compelled to help those that need it. But I will not support someone's lifestyle choice of being a transient. We are all about building community. Transients don't help, they take resources away from real community needs.

Siskiyou County voted to split from the State of California on a 4 to one vote. This is laughable on the surface. But it unveils a growing reality that we not only face in California but are or will face everywhere there is a large and growing population. People are feeling powerless and ignored by all levels of government. The latest reports of extensive spying on all of us by the federal government confirms their fears. But it is not just a growing population, it also has to do with an ever expanding glut of regulations on virtually everything we do. Building and planning departments have become feared offices that require expensive permits and boards that seem to want to regulate regardless of cost or time or any sense of reason. The vote in Siskiyou County should not be taken lightly. We could do with some serious self examination even at the local level.

Finally, there is the subject of Syria. Yes it is a horrible civil war. Yes he is a tyrant. Yes he probably used poison gas on his own people. The question is what can we do about it. After a decade of war that seems not to have helped anything except bankrupt our country, what can we do? The use of gasses like this violate International Treaties. I think

it is time to push and prod the world community to act. One country acting alone sends the wrong message. The world should be outraged and act accordingly. Not the US alone.

I really felt the 21<sup>st</sup> century would be better than this. I was wrong.

This has been Sam pennisi for community comment.