

Editor's Note: Community Voices is a monthly feature in the *Siuslaw News*. It consists of viewpoints from people in the Siuslaw region. *Siuslaw News* welcomes these opinions as part of its goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives, but they should not be interpreted as the views of the *News* or its staff.

Community Voices

THREADS OF ACTIVISM — INSISTENCE

By MICHAEL ALLEN
Activist
Special to *Siuslaw News*

In my last two Threads of Activism articles, I reflected on the importance of being persistent and consistent with your actions and message. In today's column, I reflect upon when it is necessary to become insistent.

I will go back in time and use as an example my original request to the Florence mayor and city council for them to act on climate change. It was July 19, 2019, that I asked the city council during public input to pledge in a resolution to work with the county, state and federal governments on the climate crisis and to form a local commission to come up with a comprehensive climate action plan unique to Florence.

A few months went by and there was no action taken by the city council. Coincidentally, I met City Manager Erin

Reynolds at an open house event at the Public Works building. I asked Reynolds when the council would respond to my request. Her answer was, "They don't have to."

Was Reynolds' answer enough for me to become insistent and make demands? My reaction was to turn my request into a petition, which I did and started collecting signatures. Initially I framed it as a "demand," in the preamble, but was encouraged by then-City Councilor Ron Preisler to tone it back to a "request." The councilor said he would then support the petition.

As it turned out, Mayor Joe Henry made it known he wouldn't accept the petition, so Preisler took another approach. He joined with members of the Environmental Management Advisory Committee to write a proclamation that asserted we are in a climate crisis and

identified the need to educate residents and visitors to our city about climate change.

The proclamation did not call for any actions by the city in the form of a resolution as did our petition, but it appeared to be a good next step that I supported.

When Councilor Preisler presented his proclamation to the city council, Mayor Henry refused to discuss its merits, instead claiming he had the sole right as mayor to make a proclamation, not the council as a whole. Two councilors joined him and the proclamation was voted down.

Was this rejection by the mayor and the council enough for me to become insistent and make demands? Yes, it was.

We created the Florence Climate Emergency Campaign and, following the lead of the young Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, start-

ed weekly Friday Climate Strikes in front of Florence City Hall. The primary purpose of the strikes was to demand the mayor, city council and city manager respond to our climate petition.

A secondary goal of the strikes was to educate the public about the urgent need to acknowledge the climate emergency we are all facing.

In addition, we revised the preamble to the petition to read: "We the undersigned are joining with Mr. Allen to demand the city council respond to the urgent requests below by giving them due consideration."

After completing 113 strikes over two years and two months and accumulating over 620 signatories to the petition, are we seeing any movement by the mayor and the Florence City Council? If anything, Mayor Henry has become more recalcitrant, saying he will not engage in any conversations

about our demands and further does not want city staff to do so.

So our problem remains. What can we do to make our city do the right, moral and responsible thing and move forward with setting systemic policies directed at climate change that only our city can do?

My strong belief is that we as a community must continue to insist that the city act on the climate crisis. That means we must be emphatic, firm and resolute about our demands. It also means in the face of total obstruction by our city leaders we must escalate our actions beyond strikes and the petition.

Fortunately, in my role as leader of the Oregon Chapter of Elders Climate Action, I was approached by Tom Kerns, a neighbor from the adjoining coastal town of Yachats. Mr. Kerns introduced me to his concept of a "climate and human justice

court," which he originally directed to youth but now sees it as a viable tool for adults, especially elders. He believes it can be a friendly confrontation, one that can hold the City of Florence accountable and offer solutions.

Using the vehicle of a court proceeding can bring together elders and youth in a unique way. Both are populations that are hard to ignore. Yes, it is a form of escalation, but one that can bring us closer to a resolution, namely the city and community working together as called for in our petition.

It's time for all of us to remember my mantra for activism — persistence, consistency, and now insistence.

For more information about Tom Kern's Youth Climate Court program, which can be a model for an adult court in Florence, check his website at www.youthclimatecourts.org.

CONSERVATIVE CORNER — IS AMERICA'S DESTINY MARXISM?

By JOEL MARKS
Conservative Historian
Special to *Siuslaw News*

Many years ago during the 1901 World's Fair in Buffalo, New York, President William McKinley was shot and days later pronounced deceased. His assassin was none other than a radical, then called an anarchist, named Leon Czolgosz.

Czolgosz was a steelworker who became disenchanted with the American idea of freedom and liberty and believed that wealth was distributed unfairly. His idea of fairness was to "soak the rich," which was the radical mantra of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The wealthy had too much and needed to share with the downtrodden masses.

Another famous anarchist socialist and cultural icon

of the radicals at that time was Emma Goldman, who befriended Czolgosz and introduced him to more experienced anarchists who despised America and wanted the country to cease and desist.

Czolgosz was native born in Michigan to Polish parents. Something went wrong, however, in his American educational experience in the late 1880s and '90s, and he found the radical vehicle to counter the philosophy of Washington, Jefferson and Madison.

For the murder of President McKinley, Czolgosz was electrocuted.

In those high and heady days, America was living the dream that our Founders and Framers visualized. In 1905, America was advertising for workers overseas as not only was there full employment, but we were thousands of

jobs short due to the overwhelming need for workers! America was booming due to capital formation and business small and large.

However, notwithstanding our industrialization and upper mobility, there were movements afoot to end free enterprise and our Constitutional freedoms given by some white old dead patriots who believed in unalienable rights given by God. Soon, the public wanted an income tax, a federal reserve system and popular elections of U.S. Senators, which all turned out to be bad ideas and first steps to liberty lost.

In October 1917, Vladimir Lenin brutally took Russia and the world has never been the same.

The cunning Lenin used Karl Marx economic doctrines of Das Capital, which did not and never have

worked and caused mass starvation on an unimaginable scale. From thenceforth the cancerous ideology of Marxist Leninist coercion has spread throughout the world in places like North Korea, Russia, China, Cuba, Venezuela, Vietnam and Nicaragua, to name just a few.

Eastern Europe was captured by deceptive Yalta negotiations thanks to a weak FDR, with a monster named Stalin. Alger Hiss, a Marxist operative representing the U.S. from the State Department was there contributing with aid and comfort and important information.

We went through the "RED Scare" of the 1950s and never solved the problem of Soviet infiltration in our government. The '60s saw our U.S. troops tied down for 12 years in a for-

eign jungle of rice patties and a lost war akin to Korea. All of a sudden, America was in deep trouble and many were warning of worse things to come. The '70s had an impeachment and open relations with the Marxist Chinese.

Fast forward to today and that openness recommended by high diplomats has caused a communist stronghold economically to become a powerhouse with plenty of American help.

Being in Afghanistan for 19 years of American blood and treasure has many asking the question, "Why so long?" With American resolve substantially diminished, we see our young people being indoctrinated with Marxist philosophy in the public schools. History is not history and America is not America. Instead, America

is bad, the rich are bad and critical race theory is true.

This generation knows more about the injustice of the institution of 19th century slavery than the greatness of our Constitution and Declaration in the 21st century. We have lost true Americans and are gradually and now quickly replacing it with the failed theories of a disgruntled parasite of Frederick Engels named Karl Marx.

How did this all happen? We forgot who we were and who we are and the media, the education establishment and foreign theories not commensurate with American ideals have all been responsible. Like the Biblical story of Jonah, America may one day rededicate and discover once again the principles which made her what Mr. Lincoln called the "last best hope on earth."

GUEST COLUMN — MY TOOTHBRUSH

By GREGORY MCGEE
Essayist
Special to *Siuslaw News*

This morning, I got up and walked into the bathroom, as usual, and noticed something rather strange and wonderful.

My toothbrush was in exactly the same position that I left it in 8 hours previously. Exactly! The angle was the same — it stuck out of the cup the same number of centimeters.

Now, this may seem rather mundane and normal to you, until you consider some of the following realities.

My toothbrush and I were separated by about 15 feet for over 8 hours, on the surface of a spinning globe that

is rotating at a rate of somewhere around 1,040 mph. Think about how hard it is for two Navy Blue Angel jets to fly as close as that for 10 or 20 seconds at around 600 mph without clipping a wing and becoming a rubble of flaming titanium. And these \$56 million hot rods are piloted by people who are alert and have years of practice! My toothbrush is a mindless piece of plastic, and I was asleep!

This globe we call Earth is spinning around a medium-sized star out on the edge of a pipsqueak galaxy we call the Milky Way. Earth's rotation around this star is somewhere in the neighborhood of 67,000 miles per hour.

This little star we call,

rather dramatically, "The Sun," is in motion away from the center of the Milky Way at a velocity of approximately 513,874 mph. The Milky Way is being flung out from the center of something which is too far away for us to know exactly because it is beyond the scope of our ability to see with any device we've invented (so far). The velocity of this unknown entity, in relation to a stationary point on Earth, is around 2,571,600 mph.

Then, of course, there's that "expansion of the universe" thing going on, which means that we're laterally moving away from everything else that we can see in the night sky at a rate of around 158,822 mph, most of which are not stars but other galaxies that are so far away they look like stars. (You'd think that there are fewer stars to be seen every night. But ... well, It's complicated.)

How could my toothbrush and I be even *remotely* in the same vicinity after 8 hours in the middle of all

this commotion? Can you even begin to do the math on this?

Sadly, I haven't even brought up the concept of infinity, which is what we are in the middle of.

Infinity means everything is going on forever in every direction and dimension — including time. It completely skewers math. Math in infinity means that everything we can conceive of has an infinite number of possibilities. For example, 5 times infinity is just as infinite as 5,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 times infinity, give or take a bit of infinity.

Math is merely another imaginary construct we use to create these lame, 2- or 3-dimensional metaphors to enable our minds to conceive of things that exist in 4 or 5 or infinite other dimensions.

To show you how powerful just thinking in metaphors can be, consider Albert Einstein. He was really good at metaphorical visualization, and a pretty good physicist to boot. So good,

in fact, that one day his imagination conjured up the idea that a potential release of energy from splitting an atom would be far greater than anything mankind had ever witnessed. He blew his own mind and published a scientific paper about it.

This essay somehow found its way to the War Department. When Einstein found out, it scared the living sh*t out of him, causing him to call the president of the United States and plead with him to forget everything he had ever said about atoms, because there was a distinct possibility that any weapon made based on this concept could end life on earth in a never-ending chain reaction. So, for God's sake, don't do it!

As history tells us, nobody listened to Mr. Einstein. The US military brass was just thrilled at the idea of an "ultimate weapon" because on three continents at the time, there were power-hungry psychopaths slaughtering people right and left. It was getting out of hand and had to be stopped.

Ignoring the pleadings of the good pacifist Einstein and other concerned scientists, President Truman found some other scientists that weren't so squeamish and hired them to build the weapon: Mr. Teller and Mr. Oppenheimer. They figured, what's the worst thing that could happen if we just make one or two little bombs and drop them on Japan?

Without the citizens of the US voting on it, or even being fully aware of it, in an instant (well, two instants, to be exact,) our country incinerated about 155,000 thousand human beings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

And it all began as a thought experiment in one human's mind.

Today, there are over 15,000 of these worthless weapons stacked like cordwood in the arsenals of 8 or 9 countries. I say worthless, because what could be more worthless than a weapon you can't use without killing yourself? Nukes can't be used without causing the total annihilation of civilization, just as Albert feared.

If humans make it past this horrible discovery without destroying our little orb and all its inhabitants, it will be miraculous. We have a shot at it, but then again, we could all go up in flames. Our petty little wars, ridiculous religious differences and nationalistic jealousies could fizzle out like a failing light bulb in Thomas Edison's lab before he tried tungsten.

So, tomorrow, when you wake up, consider how amazing and wonderful it is that, despite all the non-imaginary nuclear bombs waiting to explode, you and your toothbrush are still here.

Nothing is inevitable. A single thought can create a better future. Will it be yours?

We are open and ready to assist you!



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