

## LET THE PUBLIC SPEAK

### Restoring faith

EDITOR: The article covering the Downtown Streets Team, which provides free hygiene in a mobile trailer in Petaluma (and in other locations within central California) is in my opinion a generous action to write about, and I credit the program and the people involved (“Serving up a fresh look,” Jan. 27).

The uplifting news restores faith in humanity, especially with the images showing the emotions of less fortunate people who needed this act of kindness. Homelessness is an issue that is difficult to resolve and often overlooked, so this was a great way to remind people how generous actions can improve the situation.

In my opinion, everyone involved in the program and the article deserves a thank you for going out of their way to help others, either by highlighting the program or being a part of it.

### TESSA TAPPE

Penngrove

### To protect and serve

EDITOR: In the next few days, we will be reading a lot about the death of Tyre Nichols. Over and over again we will be reminded that the police officers who killed him were Black. This isn’t the issue. The issue is training, and the fact that police departments throughout the nation have become paramilitary organizations.

Until we can get away from the idea that to be a cop means to be almost like a soldier in Vietnam, we will have these incidents. I wonder how many of the five officers who were involved in the death of Nichols spent any time in the military. My husband was in the military, and what I remember is that the military had rules of engagement, discipline and excellent training. I do not know if that is the case with the training that police get in the United States. What I do know is that military equipment is often given to police departments. I have no idea why that is so.

Why don’t we go back to the idea of police as being there for us, the citizens? To protect and serve. That would be a good beginning.

### CONNIE KELLOGG

of Sonoma Valley residents who faced bumper to bumper traffic and long delays trying to evacuate during the 2017 Nuns and 2020 Glass Fires.

Yet, despite nearly four years of county planning and hundreds of written and in-person public comments critical of the flawed and incomplete EIR and specific plan, the supervisors voted to approve the specific plan and EIR in December.

True, the supervisors scaled back housing units from 1,000 to 750 homes, yet they simultaneously reduced the percentage of affordable units by nearly 50%. The majority of housing would be market rate, i.e., unaffordable.

The co-plaintiffs support more housing with a smaller amount of market-rate housing, but at a scale appropriate to the surrounding community.

### PADI SELWYN

Sebastopol

### Ban Russian athletes

EDITOR: Thomas Bach and the International Olympic Committee seem to be inclined to allow Russian athletes to compete in the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics “in the interest of international sports.” No doubt, their overriding interest is cash flow. If Russians compete under any loophole, the resulting glory to Russia and propaganda for Vladimir Putin will ultimately cause death and suffering to many.

American athletes can influence the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, which provides support to them. They who have devoted their lives to winning in the Olympics should be thinking about the outcomes from sharing the world stage with Russians. Expressing their distaste to the American powers-that-be can have an effect. The objective to blockade those who would allow Russia to have its way.

If Russia is not blocked, the Americans who resist competing have their life’s work to lose. For those who compete, I am not worthy to shame them.

Reflecting on my decision to serve in Vietnam from 1969 to 1975, the desire to stop what I believed to be aggression led me to risk my life. Can a nation, without cause, invade and massacre the population of another and not be stopped? It almost happened in 1939.

Sebastopol

**ED McATEE**

## **Disappearing settlements**

Sebastopol

EDITOR: The Fire Victims Trust Fund: One third to the lawyer, one third in taxes and one third of \$13.5 billion. So much for rebuilding your life.

## **THOMAS GARDNER**

Magalia

## **Ignoring the public**

EDITOR: The citizen groups' lawsuit challenging the Sonoma Developmental Center environmental impact report should be a wake-up call to the Sonoma County planning department and the Board of Supervisors, who continue to dismiss community input and hire consultants to do their bidding ("Citizens sue to block report," Jan. 21).

The EIR consultants' analysis, for example, claimed that wildfire evacuation with nearly 1,000 workers and 2,500 residents would have virtually no impact on evacuation travel time, despite real world experiences

---

[Copyright © 2023 PressDemocrat.com All rights reserved. Restricted use only. 2/3/2023](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) • [Terms of Service](#)

[Powered by TECNAVIA](#)

---