

OPINION

Marin IJ Readers' Forum for Sept. 27, 2020

By **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** |

September 26, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

Organizing committee protects all members

As co-chair of the Marin Organizing Committee renter protection team, I can say we agree with the headline on the Marin IJ's Sept. 10 editorial. It reads, "Like renters, Marin landlords deserve more support during pandemic." Both property owners (who earn income from rental properties) as well as tenants need help from federal, state and local governments so that there is not a tsunami of evictions.

Supporting families who rent and helping landlords are not mutually exclusive. As the editorial notes, MOC is advocating for a freeze on rent increases and expanding Marin's eviction moratorium to protect vulnerable tenants during this emergency. Our agenda also includes additional funding for rental assistance to support landlords, which is a priority of the National Apartment Association. We also support mortgage forbearance for property owners in distress.



MOC is a diverse organization, counting renters, homeowners and landlords among our membership. We seek solutions for the common good. In this time of crisis, we must act to protect families who cannot afford to pay rent due to no fault of their own, and to support the property owners who provide needed housing in our community.

— *Sami Mericle, San Rafael*

Prioritize reopening schools over all else

On Sept. 21, Marin County moved from Tier 1 to Tier 2 in California's blueprint for a safer economy system. This allowed nail salons and other personal services to open indoors, restaurants to seat potentially as many as 100 people indoors and malls to operate at 50% capacity.

What it did not allow for, is in-person schooling.

In fact, only after maintaining Tier 2 metrics for several weeks can schools consider in-person learning. During that time, we can only cross our fingers that the loosening of restrictions on nail salons and malls won't increase our case numbers to the point that we must return to Tier 1.

As a physician who specializes in the care of children and as a parent, I am dismayed by a system that values the recovery of retail and personal care over schooling. The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a statement this week echoing this dismay.

School is the essential business of childhood. At best, virtual learning only keeps children from regressing. At worst, it is an oxymoron leading to lifelong impacts on academic success, emotional development and socialization. The impacts very clearly are not symmetric, with children of color and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds suffering disproportionately.

We must ask ourselves as a society, what do we value: our children or going to the movies?

— *Dr. Judith Klein, Mill Valley*

Pt. Reyes made the right call to preserve ranches

I applaud the National Park Service for its measured and reasonable approach ("Point Reyes releases final plan to preserve ranches, cull tule elk," Sept. 19). Please, don't weaken. There is support for the legacy ranches in Point Reyes.



For a year that has been truly awful on so many levels, surely there must be other things to whine about than vilifying the park officials and hardworking people.

— *K.H. Vogee, Novato*

Anti-racism majority is a first in U.S. history

The last four years in our “not so United” States of America has produced a level of tumult and division the likes of which we’ve never seen. Our political polarization is tantamount to the Civil War with racial inequality once again at its core. This cultural war has been brewing for some time and now conservative talk-show gurus such as one Rush Limbaugh, who recently received the Medal of Freedom, liken the NFL to “a game between the Crips and the Bloods without weapons.” Consequently, non-White professional athletes who demonstrate against systemic racism in America are condemned as traitors by this political coup.

The lowest common denominator in America is angrily searching for scapegoats to blame for their unhappiness. Non-White people are once again the scapegoats. Attempts to advance a political agenda in this regard has resulted in the largest worldwide demonstrations in history. To the best of my knowledge, any anti-racism majority has never existed in America. There is one now and it is beautiful to behold. Perhaps a way to break down the barriers of racial fear and the White privilege that accompanies it, is to ask: If systemic racism does not exist — then why do we still have minorities living in ghettos?

— *Dennis Kostecki, Sausalito*

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