

OPINION

OUR VIEW

Get the facts on RECAP

The right to voice your opinion is an important one. But that opinion must be based on fact to have credibility.

We urge everyone with an interest in where and whether the Renewable Energy Clean Air Project is located in Koochiching County to circle on their calendars Dec. 12. That’s when developers associated with the project will again provide information and answer questions about the proposed waste-to-energy project. The meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. at the AmeriInn.

It’s not the first time developers and local officials involved in the project have offered this information to the public. A similar opportunity was offered on June 22 at Rainy River Community College. Unfortunately, just a few more than a handful of people not associated with the project attended to hear John Howard and Steve Korstad of Coronal LLC, a plasma gasification and consulting company, provide a plethora of details about the proposed facility that could employ about 20 people, not counting transportation jobs, and provide the county with a \$2.5 million annual revenue stream.

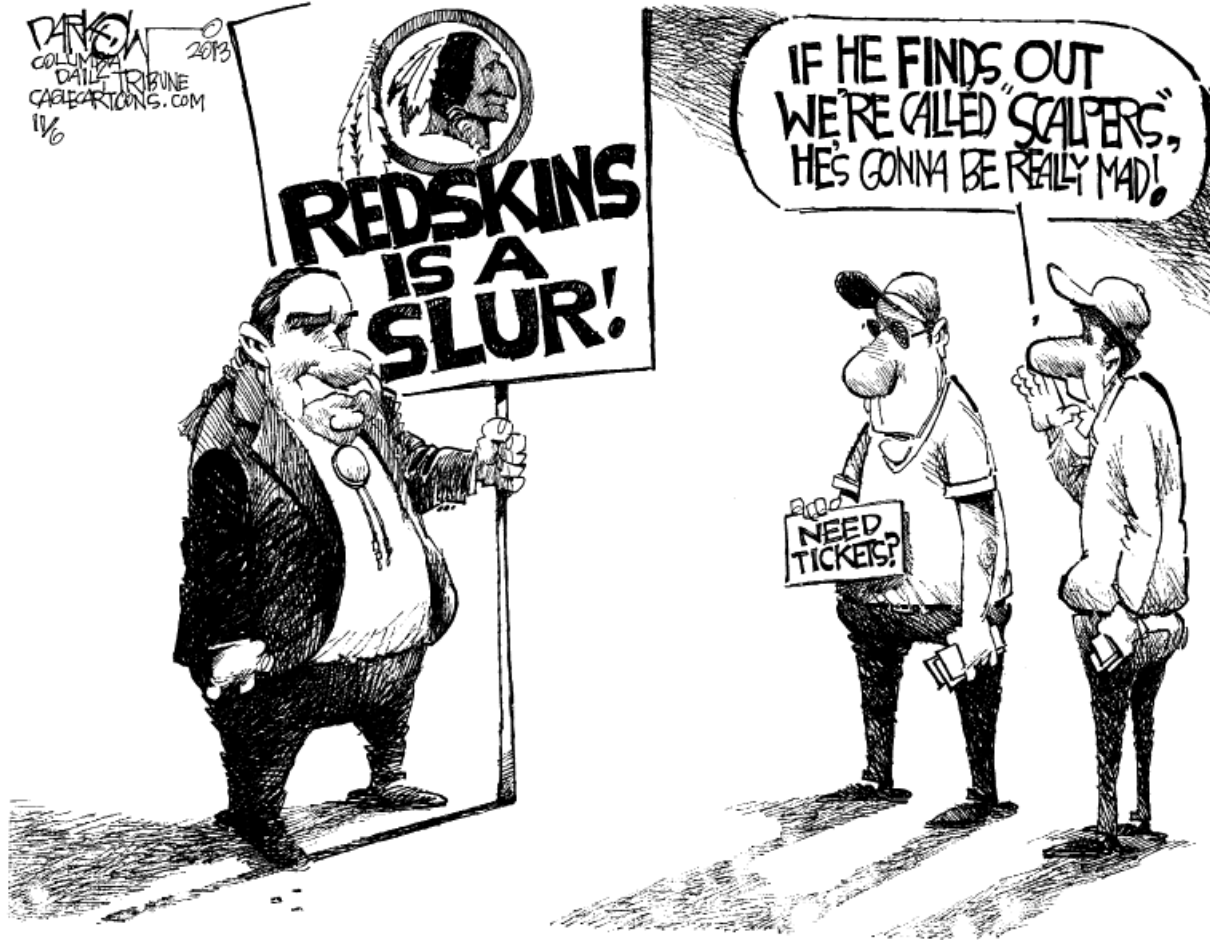
The Ranier City Council in October took action opposing constructing the RECAP facility on County Highway 155. And this week, the Koochiching County Board accepted a petition from Ranier area

residents opposing the County Highway 155 site.

We understand concerns about where any kind of industrial-type facility is located. The acronym NIMBY — not in my back yard — grew popular as a way to explain that while any given project may be a positive one for a community and/or an industry, few people want to live near them. But before spreading inaccurate statements or basing opinions on misinformation, we urge people to get the facts about RECAP and then first consider whether RECAP is a good fit for this community. And second, whether a proposed site on County Highway 155 should be considered.

Koochiching County has partnered with Coronal in exploring RECAP. We urge county and Coronal officials to take the show on the road to Ranier, even before the December meeting, to be sure that Ranier city officials and city residents are provided accurate and clear information about the proposed project and the No. 1 potential site for the facility.

No final decisions have been made to move forward with RECAP. It is still a proposal. But in these times, an extremely unique project that would not only benefit the environment, but also create jobs and draw visitors to this community ought to be fully considered and decisions made based on the facts.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Caregivers play important role

To the editor,

In Borderland, as well as across the country, more and more Americans are caring for a loved one with a chronic condition, disability or the frailties of old age. There are estimated to be as many as 90 million family, or “informal,” caregivers in the United States today.

November is National Family Caregivers Month. This year’s theme is “Family Caregivers – Now More Than Ever!” The numbers are growing. In part, this is due to the increase in incidents of Alzheimer’s disease, of children with special needs and of the return home of wounded veterans.

Men are now almost as

likely to say they are family caregivers as women (37 percent of men; 40 percent of women). The work of these informal caregivers is critical, with almost half performing complex medical and nursing tasks for their loved ones – such as managing multiple medications, dressing wounds and operating specialized medical equipment.

The economic impact is significant. Family caregivers provide some \$450 billion worth of unpaid care each year, more than all of Medicaid funding and twice as much as homecare and nursing home services combined.

At Koochiching Aging Options, where our program specialist Leslee Loop

also serves as caregiver consultant, we see how important caregivers are in Koochiching County. The assistance they provide often goes without thanks and they remain invisible pillars of our community.

Please, if you recognize yourself as a family caregiver, know that you are appreciated and that you matter. If you have contact with someone who is giving care to a loved one, tell them that they are providing an important and much appreciated service – “now more than ever.”

Douglas Skrief
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How to contact your lawmakers

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Psychics: Should they be banned?



Danny TYREE
TYRADES!

Apparently some municipalities have been delivering a slap in the face to palm readers.

According to a recent Associated Press story, the nation’s palmists, mediums, astrologers, crystal ball gazers, tarot card readers, reincarnation experts, tea leaf interpreters, curse removers and other psychic folk are chafing under restrictions imposed by a large number of towns — restrictions that may include an outright ban.

A 2009 Pew Research Center survey reveals that one in seven Americans have consulted a psychic. It is not revealed how many of these are diehard true believers and how many merely dabbled with the supernatural as a lark after seeing Dionne Warwick shill for the Psychic Friends Network.

(Is it even possible for a psychic to HAVE friends? Seems they would always be thinking, “He’d like to do WHAT with my girlfriend??? Who is he — Stretch Armstrong?”)

Yes, there have been some horrific swindles perpetrated by alleged psychics; but the authorities seem too eager to take the easy way out and use a one-size-fits-all approach to industries that have a high percentage of deception. Have fun finding a store open on your next shopping trip when the authorities finally crack down on businesses that promise “Easy to assemble,” “New and improved” and

“Just like homemade.”

New York is one state that forces even sincere psychics to issue a disclaimer labeling all their services as for “entertainment only.” (We probably also need an “entertainment only” disclaimer for activities such as “writing a letter to your congressman.”) Some say that scrupulous seers already divulge enough self-effacing comments about the limitations and unpredictability of their powers. I think the new industry slogan is “Fortunetelling: the Third World electric grid of decision-making.”

Perhaps the savviest thing for psychics to do is reach a compromise with the lawmakers so that the regulations are as vague as their predictions. (“This statute shall become effective the 15th-ish of September, or a month with some of the same letters as September and...”)

Defenders of psychics rightly point out that there

is a First Amendment issue involved here. Apparently towns don’t even want to cut citizens any slack for shouting “Depending on the alignment of the planets, there may or may not be some degree of spontaneous combustion in an establishment such as this at some hazy point in the near or distant future” in a crowded theater.

I’m trying not to take sides in the controversy. My friend Dinsdale, however, is a little bolder, saying “The authorities are trying to interfere with the GIFT that these fortunetellers have. And someone went to the trouble of wrapping that gift and someone went to the trouble of placing a big bow on the gift. And someone put a big flashy nametag on the gift. Let’s see if we can read that name. Could it be... SATAN???” (Dinsdale himself has a gift for eating too many Twinkies while watching “Saturday Night Live” reruns.)

Perhaps I’m being overly optimistic, but maybe things will work out without any new regulations. If just one spiritualist could conjure a long-dead ancestor who would be honest enough to say, “I thought ferret dung was a good antiseptic for leg amputation, and you’re asking ME for advice on which graduate school to pick? Sheesh!,” people could decide for themselves.

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