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Letters to the editor

Phosphate mining should be halted

Mosaic Mining Company comes to the Manatee County commissioners once again to seek permitting to mine phosphate on 2,028 acres of land in the Altman Tract. The public hearing will be June 3 at 1:30 p.m. at 1112 Manatee Ave. and this time commissioners have directed staff to draft a development order for approval. Manatee County citizens will want to attend both the public hearing and the background information rally at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 29, at Manatee's Central Library, 1201 Barcarota Blvd.

"No more phosphate mining in Manatee County's wetlands" is the advice we must send our county commissioners. Why? Because . . .

Mining destroys wetlands, which are necessary breeding places for fisheries and purifiers of our bays, rivers and estuaries. Wetlands are not useless swamps waiting to be developed. Furthermore, replacement wetlands never function the same.

Mining dredges up cancer-causing inorganic and radioactive heavy metals, which are normally found 30 feet underground. The dredging also blocks water from moving underground to our creeks and rivers.

The mined phosphate is used to make synthetic fertilizer, which feeds the plant but kills the soil. Soil dries up, requires more fertilizer and more water and eventually becomes useless. Organic farming has become the answer to yesterday's synthetic fertilizer.

The well-being of not only the people of Manatee County, but those in lands far removed from ours is too much precious to jeopardize by allowing an increase in phosphate mining in our county's precious wetlands.

*Jo Williams
Bradenton*

TE committee woes

Janet Vander Molen's May 10th letter helps explain some of the problems we are having in Trailer Estates. The information that was requested from the Trailer Estates office is available from the county without question. Does she worry about that? How about going after the county? If she believes in following the law so much, then simply do it.

The Marina Committee recently resigned because of their conflict with the board. This was a hard-working committee of folks that's been here for a long time and that were knowledgeable about boats and docks. They could get nowhere.

Janet Vander Molen mentions that the next thing they (the Future Planning Committee) will want is the date of birth. That has already been asked for and refused. The Future Planning Committee, which is a standing committee to the Board of Trustees and deserves a little bit of trust, was given the charge by the board to do a needs assessment. The committee asked for all the data, including the birth date. The purpose was not to look to see how old any one person is but rather allow the computer to compile different age groups by gender to help assist in the needs assessment.

Some board members have succeeded in scaring folks by making them think someone wants to know their individual age.

All trustees, Future Planning and activities leaders were given a simple feedback form to respond to in an effort to establish ideas, interest and suggestions for the survey. They were given six weeks to respond. Not one trustee responded. So, now some on the Needs Assessment Survey Committee may drop out.

We had our Sunshine workshop. The park's attorney did a great job. I do hope it puts some of this to rest. But I really doubt it as it goes deeper. Power, revenge, grudge, hatred and arrogance . . . all of the above. Perhaps it will be the attorney general that will have the opportunity to bring peace the next time?

The park's Sunshine review is able at www.trailerestatesflorida.com.

*Chester Force
Bradenton*

Oil execs grill Congress

Just once I would like to see the oil company executives sit before Congress and the Senate. Let the oil executives ask the questions and put them on the hot seat.

Question No. 1: When are you going to let us rebuild and build new refinery plants?

Question No. 2: When are you going to let us drill in the Gulf and the Florida Straights next to the Chinese oil rigs?

Question No. 3: When are you going to stop the deceit and let us drill in Anwar where there are no animals?

Question No. 4: When are you going to open up some of the federal land that people are not allowed on and let us drill for the millions of barrels of oil currently under our own soil?

Question No. 5: When are you going to stop taking money from the environmentalists and give us room to develop new types of energy for the citizens of this country? After all, oil company after oil company invests billions of dollars every year to find, develop and research new alternatives. The actual profit the oil companies are making is about 7 percent. Then, a lot of this 7 percent is reinvested for research and development. We ask you senators and congressmen, where are the billions of tax dollars going that is placed in your hands every year by the good hard-working taxpayers in this country?

*Mike McLeod
Palmetto*

Sympathies to family

The May 12 headline read like a déjà vu of May 19, 1986, almost identical 22 years later.

Deepest sympathies to the McClendon family, and prayers for the Murray family (a teammate of my grandson, Louis Goff, Jr.).

Families can pray in their homes if not at school. We are praying for you.

*Daisy Cooper, mother of Spencer Golfin (May 2, 1969-May 18, 1986)
Parrish*

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