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Posted on Fri, Nov. 08, 2002

Duluth News Tribune

Letters to the Editor

Corps of Engineers project draws praise

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has informed the Park Point Community Club that its dredge-fill project at the Superior Entry on Minnesota Point is nearly complete for the season (News Tribune, Sept. 28). Without question, they deserve praise for a well-run operation.

I was president of the community club in 1998 when a similar filling project was conducted at the same site. It didn't go as smoothly. Benefits were short-lived, damage to the surrounding area was excessive and complaints from hikers were common.

When the Corps approached us about this year's project, we raised a number of strong objections based on that previous experience. To their great credit, the Corps listened, then acted on our recommendations. Both the Duluth and Detroit offices willingly accepted our research and photos; in fact, they have requested more. They convinced us of the absolute need for the fill and altered their pipeline route and operational procedures to accommodate us.

With regard to the "geotubes" (the immense nylon sandbags installed behind the north breakwater), no one knows whether they'll stay buried or wash clear, but the Corps was honest about that, too. They didn't sweep us aside or try to bully us into submission.

We appreciate project manager Curt Anderson and his crew for the "handle with care" attitude they used, both with the unique Minnesota Point environment and with us.

DAVE JOHNSON
DULUTH

The writer is a member of the Park Point Community Club Environmental Committee.

Hunt if you wish, but cover your kills

With deer hunting season quickly approaching, I feel there is a need to remind hunters of a simple courtesy.

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While I'm sure you are all proud and excited to show your friends and fellow hunters your 12 -point buck or the doe you got with the special permit, not all of us share in your excitement.

I understand your reasons for hunting, such as overpopulation resulting in starvation of deer (although I do believe there are more divine interventions than the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource handling things, and I don't think they are charging \$26 a pop), and if there are too many deer they pose a threat to our safety on the roads, blah, blah, blah.

But I, along with others I am sure, have a soft heart when it comes to deer, or any animal for that matter, and do not appreciate driving down the road with the head of a dead deer hanging out the back of the truck in front of me! I honestly respect your rights as hunters to hunt as long as you respect my right not to be a spectator of the aftermath.

So, please, out of respect for us animal-loving, soft-hearted folks out there, bring a tarp with you and cover your kill. It will be much appreciated.

*VICKI OESTREICH
DULUTH*

Media coverage inflates egos of sports stars

I share the opinions in an Oct. 19 letter regarding the insane level that sports salaries have reached. The extent of our local newspaper sports coverage also sparked my curiosity, so I tallied the coverage over one week's time and compared it to the business coverage.

Here's how a typical week (Sept. 29. to Oct. 5) adds up: 59 pages devoted to sports and 23 pages devoted to business. Of those 23 pages, 13 were stock market quotes, leaving only 10 pages each week to cover local (but more often national) business news. Is it any wonder that sports salaries have gone to an insane level and players think they are actually worth that kind of money? Our media certainly gives that impression.

*PAT NEROS
TWO HARBORS*

Other countries deserve level playing field

Former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Jim Wright's Oct. 22 commentary made excellent points about how much United States military and economic might resembles those of the Roman Empire.

U.S. arrogance and heavy-handedness in dealing with the rest of the world is indeed much as the haughty and ruthless Romans operated in their heyday. But Wright is rather disingenuous when he places the United States above the Romans because "we don't own foreign colonies or covet them" and because of "our advocacy of human rights."



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The United States, with its economic incursions into much of the world, as well as its placing of military enclaves around the globe, comes very close to "owning" foreign nations, and this country certainly covets the oil that lies under the soil of numerous countries. As for human rights, more than a century of U.S. government support of tyrannical and despotic foreign leaders belies Wright's claim for any moral superiority. The United States is indeed the world's lone superpower, and therein lies much of the woe of the world. Power corrupts, and superpower corrupts thoroughly.

What the world needs more than anything else is a truly level playing field. But how many of us, snug and smug in our relative wealth and comfort, will willingly share these with those less fortunate, the desperate and dispossessed poor whose number is legion?

*WARREN HOWE
DULUTH*

Northland workers need global representation

The local community and area is now aware of the implementation of a concessionary labor contract on the part of UPM-Kymmene onto the rank and file of UPM-Blandin in Grand Rapids. The underlying reason for this move can be summed up in two words: corporate greed.

Implementing a concessionary contract is customary when the parent company is in the throes of bankruptcy. UPM-Kymmene is far from that, as your own paper reports. During the first three quarters of 2002, UPM-Kymmene realized a net profit of more than \$500 million. This is far from bankruptcy.

Another factor in this concessionary package was that the parent company overpaid for the purchase of Blandin to ensure its place in the North American market and to have a place to dump its foreign-made product. The closest competitive bid was more than \$100 million lower than that paid by UPM-Kymmene. The employees of the local unit are being made to pay for this overpayment.

Sappi, in Cloquet and only an hour away, can offer its personnel a pay increase and bonus to sign. It also must be competitive in the global marketplace.

Why can they offer their employees an increase to at least keep pace with the cost of living? The "operating flexibility" cited in the news release on implementation of this contract does away with the very premise of unionism -- seniority.

It also takes away progressive moves based upon a worker's experience and expertise and replaces it with a pick-and-choose environment. Not very fair, is it? I hope that the area and the community understand the necessity for the local employees to go outside and seek representation by a large group such as the Teamsters. It is in our best interest to be globally unionized in the

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