

OPINION

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Keep fighting for health care

AB 1400, California's Medicare for All bill, failed, joining former attempts at reforming our broken healthcare system. Why is it so hard in the world's richest country to provide this basic human necessity?

❖ LETTER

The answer is clear: Profiteering health and pharmaceutical companies are loath to give up the enormous profits gained by syphoning funds from every healthcare dollar we cough (no pun intended) up. They use our money to lobby and bribe our legislators to do their bidding. Any legislator who accepts their donation/bribe must also realize that refusing to play ball will mean the money stops and they will use it instead to unseat them at the first opportunity. They are owned.

Democrats in the California Assembly who receive these bribes have no concern for Californians who go bankrupt because of enormous medical bills, or become homeless and/or die from lack of access to health care — the goal is to stay in power. They must either be made personally aware of the suffering they allow and give up corporate bribes or they must be replaced by popular demand.

We can *all* have comprehensive Cradle to Grave healthcare free at the point of service; that means no excessive taxes in the form of copays, deductibles, out of network medical bills or wage reductions to pay health insurance corporation fees.

History clearly shows that too many of our elected officials will not do this for us. We must come together and do it for the people we love.

Diane Ryerson
Arcata

Touring CGS Humboldt Bay

The United States Coast Guard stands ready to serve the north coast at a moment's notice with boats that can withstand a 360 degree turn around in rough waters and return to an upright position, and with helicopters that patrol the coast in search and rescue operations.

A beautiful redwood plaque reminds visitors of the constant dangers of the sea. It reads, "Station Humboldt Bay On Duty-Storm Warriors — 'I will never unnecessarily jeopardize myself, my boat, or my crew; but will do so freely to rescue those in peril'."

Trinidad Museum Society directors Scott Baker, Mary Spinas Kline and this columnist along with Bureau of Land Management-California

Coastal National Monument archeologist Sharyl Kinnear were given a tour of the exquisite Humboldt Bay Sector headquarters building, constructed in 1936, the boat house and the archives room by USCG Coast Guardsmen Christopher Hinote, Jessica Cessor and Carter G. McGuire last week.

Cessor and McGuire had extended the invitation to visit the Humboldt Bay station during the 150 Year Commemoration of Trinidad Head Lighthouse last December.

The Coast Guardsmen shared archives from their collections, including historic photographs and diagrams of the 1871 Trinidad Head Lighthouse and the grounds when



❖ TRINIDAD TIDINGS
Patti Fleschner



❖ COASTIES Coast Guardsman Christopher Hinote, Trinidad Museum Society Director Mary Spinas Kline, Bureau of Land Management Archeologist Sharyl Kinnear, Trinidad Museum Society Vice President Scott Baker and Coast Guardsman Jessica Cessor in front of United States Coast Guard Humboldt Bay Station headquarters, built in 1936. The historians were given a tour last week. VIA PATTI FLESCHNER | TRINIDAD TIDINGS

the USCG housing still stood in place. There are even paint recommendations and instructions for keeping the lighthouse in good repair. Copies of some of the documents will be shared with the historians.

Hats off to the USCG Coast Guardsmen, for sharing history, and for keeping constant watch over the coast.

Email Patti at baycity@sonic.net

Panthers get physical and gritty, could end up with winning season

Early this season, McKinleyville's Varsity basketball team made a lot of noise upsetting Arcata in a game they won 67-58. The win showed a very physical and gritty side to this Panthers team that had been dormant up to this game.

The COVID momentum struck the team, shutting down play for a while, and since returning to league play on 1/18, the Panthers went 2-1 before a



❖ PANTHER REPORT
Garrett Grosjean

rematch with Arcata in enemy territory. The task proved to be too much, as McKinleyville ended up losing the shootout 61-78.

McKinleyville's downfall in this game was their defense; one that has held up against good teams, including the first game against Arcata, in which Mack limited them to just 58 points on 37 percent team field goal percentage.

In this game; however, Arca-

ta lit up the Mack defense for 78 points on 48 percent team field goal percentage, including four different players with double digit point totals compared to McKinleyville's two.

Since then, McKinleyville dropped a game to Eureka (43-46), bringing their league record to 4-3 and falling below .500 since the COVID break (1/7 - 1/17) with a record of 2-3.

McKinleyville has one last game on the schedule, 2/4 at Del Norte, and go into it with a chance to secure a winning season.

What fits into a neighborhood and what doesn't, and why

In 1991, Duncan Burgess hired my company, Small World Construction, to build an addition onto the back of his unique 1907 house on A Street around the corner from my I-house on Union Street. Duncan's house had been officially designated a landmark historical preservation structure by the city so that the siding had to match, the rooflines, the window designs, etc.

But the most important thing to Duncan (no relation, except that our genes both go back to the UK) was getting a new, bright south-facing living room and a deck with stairs down to his gardens in the back yard. The other factor was that he wanted the three-story addition's foundation to go deep down into the soil so that it would act as a brace and keep the wobbly pier and post two-story part of the house in the front from shaking too much in the wind. He got both — living room and brace — making him one happy customer — the kind I always tried for — and me one proud building contractor.

Right across the street from Duncan's house at the time stood a one-story brick Mormon Church (which was moving up to McKinleyville for a bigger facility.) The Mormons, when they finally moved on, didn't know what to do with the building, since the structure had reached a level of decay that was unrecoverable.

It turned out that nobody else wanted it either, for it was sitting there taking up the entire hill top which could be turned into something else like a park or maybe a site for another church or just be restored to building lots. The Mormons eventually got permission (after a tough struggle with the city) to demolish the unsightly thing that looked more like a reformatory than a House of God.

Duncan was happy to see it go. His next door neighbor, Gene Callahan was also happy, as were many of the other neighbors. The building lots came up for sale in time — no mini-park for the East Side — and everybody hoped to

see the hilltop developed into splendid single family houses that fit the existing architecture, or, as the Planning Department itself phrased it for any Bayview development, "to ensure that new buildings are designed to fit appropriately within the existing neighborhood context."

That was the idea. That is not what happened. On two of the four lots across the street from Duncan's historical home sit two brand new Contemporary two-story structures with high imposing front elevations built almost right up to the street and exterior stairways leading to an upper story.

On the northernmost elevation, Duncan views a massive wood sidewall that reaches all the way from the front to the back of the long building with a gaping hole in the front for a carport. Both of the Contemporary style buildings that have just been completed seem to dominate their entire lots, (although I have been assured by the Planning Department that the 50 percent open space requirement has been met) and look completely out of place — according to some — among the more traditional buildings on the block.

To be sure, the buildings designed by K. Boodjeh Architects across from Duncan's house were thoughtfully created, and, at least in my opinion, would look good in a setting where the surrounding architecture did not clash, for example, on a hillside in San Francisco.

The problem is where they are located. They look misplaced on a hillside in a small town like Arcata. The reason they were approved, as stated in the Commission, findings, was "The custom, contemporary design on a vacant lot adds building style and diversity to the Bayview neighborhood with its multi-level and multi-wall and roof plane design."

That a building offers "style and diversity" doesn't tell you much. Bayview architecture has been evincing the very thing for over a century and a half. Or to imply

that a new house design which uses "multi-level and multi-wall and roof plane design" evokes something unique is hardly informative. The feature of breaking up the roof lines is common in contemporary architecture. In fact, there is already a house exhibiting the very feature down the street on the same hillside.

Long ago, at the beginning of the 20th century, the Modern period of architecture turned its back on the past for better or worse, spawning the many steel and glass monsters that populate every city on the globe. When the PostModern period came along in

has a stable squarish shape and an overall balance in the rooflines that together give the house a convincing fit to its long, sloping lot — a lot, to repeat, on the very same hillside as the two buildings under discussion.

When considering the fit of a house on its lot, a thoughtful designer might ask:

- Does the design leave space around the building, avoiding the impression of entirely filling up its lot?

- Does the building appear friendly and welcoming? For example, does it offer a defined porch as a feature for mediation

The past is not something we want to turn our backs on, but just the opposite, we want to effectively integrate this past into the present. We want to live our past, not set it apart and visit it like a museum.

the 1970s, architectural elements from the past were re-introduced, but only to be made fun of, not because they were intrinsically useful or beautiful.

The Contemporary architecture that followed Post-Modernism resurrected the modernist ethic of disdain of the past, as if the past is no longer relevant and therefore needs no deferential reference from the professional architect. He/she is free to do what they want wherever they want because *the architect* sets the standard for a contemporary lifestyle, not the community, the city or some other authority.

That kind of permissiveness towards architecture by a city that purports to preserve its past produces, as an example, what one sees on the northern-most sidewall that I find particularly offensive; a long, sheer surface that looks like a cross-section of a building plan, not the side of a finished house. The effect of this elevation is to give little consideration to its future neighbors.

By comparison, the other Contemporary home at the north end of A Street built a few years ago

between the public outside and the private inside?

- Does the building express the site on which it sits or does it seem to possess it by offering a certain stand-offishness more appropriate in a big city than a small town?

- Does the building express congeniality and openness like a home that likes where it sits with side yards to give breathing room for itself and for the other residents nearby allowing them a sense of taking in the whole house when passing down the street?

As a resident of the Bayview Conservation Area, as well as a builder of several new homes in the area and modifications of older ones, I abided by the directive to "assure that new construction, modifications or alterations of noteworthy structures, and significant changes to older structures are harmonious with the existing character of the neighborhood" (for example, the traditional-styled four homes built by Small World Construction in the Bayview Conservation Area on the corner of Seventh and Union streets in the early 1990s).

The now-defunct Design Review Committee, which approved the current Contemporary style project on A Street — and the City Council which denied the appeal to stop it — clearly reneged on its commitment to protect the Bayview neighborhood, my neighborhood, from unwanted development.

The neighbors who opposed the A Street development during its approval process took the position that it violated the historic character of the street. Many of us in Arcata love what the past has given to the cultural atmosphere about the town. The past is not something we want to turn our backs on, but just the opposite, we want to effectively integrate this past into the present.

We want to live our past, not set it apart and visit it like a museum. When the opposition group appealed the Planning Commission's decision to the City Council, they were voted down, allowing K. Boodjeh Architects to go forward with the firm's Contemporary-style buildings, two of which sit there presently.

I hope — and Duncan still joins me in this hope (although he continues to be disappointed by prior experience) — that in the future the Planning Commission, as well as the individual designing a new home, — whether architect or home owner — and this applies to any neighborhood, considers where they are putting that home before they put it there. They might ask themselves — and consult with the neighbors thereabouts, for example, in a public hearing during a Design Review process — whether the design is ill-conceived for that neighborhood, or truly enhances it.

A new house, whatever its design, traditional or contemporary, needs to fit its particular site, show respect for its neighbors, and honor the homes nearby that came before it, all of which will give the new home an opportunity to properly settle in with its neighbors up and down the street in good faith and with dignity.

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