CORRESPONDENCE 2016/12/30

Kaufman.

Andrew Peat

From: W Reuben Kaufman <
Sent: December-29-16 13:22
To: ageorge@saltspringfire.com; jholmes@saltspringfire.com; trustees@saltspringfire.com

Board of Trustees

20 February 2017

Dear Firefighter people,

I just read Jamie Holmes' piece on the Exchange, which was very informative. Obviously, it contradicts some points that have been made by some former trustees, and it is this that leads me to write the following.

This issue is extremely important for us citizens. But it is also extremely confusing to us to have significant contradictions from people, all of who we assume to be knowledgeable. How can one resolve this?

I will make the assumption (I hope correct) that neither side is actively trying to deceive the public. But it is so often the case that representatives of both sides of an important issue tend to malign each other, and the result is counterproductive. This is the case, for example, among the Lyme Disease "community", with public health authorities and Lyme advocacy groups doing exactly that for years. I, as a tick biologist, can see that both sides on that issue get some things right and some things wrong, but the result of these personal attacks is that pretty well nothing gets resolved.

So may I make the following suggestion?

Might a selection of you people from both sides agree to participate in sort of a "round-table" to draw up a formal list of important questions, discuss them, debate them and produce a document that both sides can agree upon for distribution to the public? Undoubtedly this will require more than just a single face-to-face meeting. But the result could be that even if only a few issues are agreed upon, that would be very positive for the community.

If there are outstanding issues that can't be resolved after concerted discussion, then these too can be presented to the public, but in an objective manner. What I think is important here is that the final document presented to the public be produced by a single group of authors.

It is also important that those people who engage in this round-table discussion agree to be as objective as possible. No personal attacks around the table, and no arguments based solely on a pre-conceived ideology.

If asked, I would be happy to review a "final draft" of such a report, not to contribute anything of substance of course (I have no expertise here) but only to help with clarity of presentation. Basically only some word-smithing if that should be needed..... But only if asked, of course.

I believe that some process as outlined above could be very helpful for the public at large!

Yours sincerely,
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