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—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers
—Format.....LETTERS - Opinions - Letters to the Editor
—Dateline.....Brattleboro
—Article Number:.....43317



Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Together, we can fix what's breaking

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 'As the we watch the broader world descend into chaos,
3 our best response should be to find ways to strengthen our
4 communities'

####END SUBHED####

5 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

6 IN THIS MOMENT when everything seems to be getting
7 more chaotic every day, everywhere you look, it might seem like
8 a strange time to imagine a long term vision for a thriving world.

9 I would argue that this is as good a time as ever. Had we
10 collectively (not just a handful of visionary freaks) done so
11 decades ago, we would be much better off now.

12 But we can't go back, and there's nothing like a disaster
13 to shake things up, and open the door to doing things differently.

14 We have gone from the post-World War II consumer
15 boom taking our focus away from our away from tight-knit
16 communities and into suburban developments with no real social
17 focus, which made us good consumers.

18 With the digital revolution, it is likely that we have never
19 met many of our "friends" in real life ("IRL").

20 Social media has made a mockery of real friendships and
21 real discourse.

22 The inability of people to even tell if they're interacting
23 with a real human or a bot, whether the subject is of national
24 interest, or our town election, should have us all concerned.

25 * * *

26 THE GOOD NEWS is that we can still choose to talk with
27 our neighbors.

28 I did a lot of that recently, and found them remarkably
29 open to the idea.

30 I have also been having great conversations with town-
31 and state-level leaders. They all seem interested in trying to find
32 better solutions to the challenges we face.

33 As anywhere one looks, they can get stuck in policy
34 silos. At least in Vermont, I don't think this is an intractable
35 problem.

36 As the we watch the broader world descend into chaos,
37 our best response should be to find ways to strengthen our
38 communities.

39 * * *

40 WE NEED TO make stronger real personal connections,
41 and at the same time find as many ways to be as self-reliant as
42 individuals and as a community as possible.

43 This means building local capacity to take care of as
44 many of our real needs — for instance, food, shelter,
45 transportation, medical, as well as being able to make and
46 maintain the equipment necessary to support us.

47 A few decades ago, we had a fair amount of capacity to
48 do these things. We are quickly losing those who have the
49 practical knowledge.

50 To the degree we can rebuild this capacity, we will be
51 able to resist being buffeted by the insanity beyond our borders.

52 It also sets us to be part of a thriving society, if others
53 follow our lead.

54 We see all around us how easy it is to break things, both
55 physical and institutional.

56 Building things, especially those that we want to last, is a
57 long-term investment.

58 Let's wisely invest in a better future.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

59 **FRIC SPRUYT** is a property owner and property manager
60 in Brattleboro and a member of the town's energy committee.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

61 0

####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

####BEGIN LINKS####

62

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

####BEGIN VIDEO####

63

###END VIDEO###

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

###BEGIN LOGLINE###

64

###END LOGLINE###