

OPINION

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Divided opinions on voluntary euthanasia

WHEN I saw that the Voluntary Euthanasia Bill was to be debated in SA Parliament I wrote to my local member, Michael Pengilly asking him, as my representative in Parliament, to please support the bill.

I wrote in detail to Mr Pengilly of my experience earlier this year, when my family and I had to watch helplessly as my wife endured her final days after 18 months of suffering. She constantly expressed her wish to end her suffering and exit her life peacefully surrounded by her loved ones. Nothing could be done. I received a letter in reply from Mr Pengilly which consisted of a few lines which stated, in effect, that everyone's opinion is different and that his opinion on the matter differs from mine. Therefore he does not support the Bill.

I am probably naïve, but my understanding of a democracy is that members of Parliament are elected to represent the views of their constituents. Mr Pengilly would know full well that the overwhelming majority of his constituents support some form of Voluntary Euthanasia. It doesn't matter what his personal views are, or the views of the party he represents - he has been elected to represent the views of the majority of his constituents. Unfortunately, our parliamentary system has become dominated by party politics, and elected representatives sit in judgment like Roman Emperors, giving the thumbs up or down depending on personal or party policies, regardless of the views of the constituents who put them there in the first place.

Roger Buddle,
Victor Harbor

QUESTION OF FUNDS

I wonder if the Strathalbyn residents at the pre-election 'Meet the Candidates' function in October 2014, who heard mayoral candidate Keith Parkes emphatically deny any third party funding support for his campaign, other than a small donation from a close friend; realised that his campaign was in fact part of a Goolwa and District Residents and Ratepayers Association (GDRRA) 'ticket' which supported four Goolwa candidates for council and Keith Parkes for mayor.

And would they have anticipated that the GDRRA success in having three of those candidates elected together with Mayor Parkes, would set the scene for the recent



PHOTO OF THE WEEK: Jessica Macrow took this photo from her backyard in Mount Compass during last week's storm. Send photos to victortimes@fairfaxmedia.com.au

resignation of Alexandrina council's CEO, which has been attributed to the lack of support by a group of elected members of council?

With council divided on the question of a performance-related CEO pay increase, it is perhaps significant that all three GDRRA supported councillors voted against the CEO pay increase, and with the vote tied at five all, Mayor Parkes then used his casting vote to also reject it. Given that the source of the GDRRA funding which paid for the election campaign of Mayor Parkes and these three councillors was an 'anonymous'

donor who has subsequently been identified on the public record as a local businessman with significant development interests, one might ask whether recent events have been in the public interest; and whether the 2014 local government election campaign has met an acceptable level of transparency and accountability.

Trevor Harden,
Clayton Bay

EVERYONE DESERVES RESPECT

Change is inevitable, but it's how you navigate it that matters. In this ever changing

world we urge everyone who cares about our society - whether you live in Sydney or Swan Hill - to remember we all deserve respect and dignity. Our country's success is built on this very idea of a 'fair go' for all, a notion underpinned by the very basic principle of humanity. Humanity is universal in nature and urges that all people - no matter their gender, race or religion - to be treated with respect, and given the chance to live life in dignity. In this world we have choices to make: a fair go for all, or just for some; unity or separation. We all have the chance to nurture and promote the kindness, compassion and goodness that are essential for human dignity.

At Red Cross, we work for unity, humanity and the inherent dignity of every person. We encourage all Australians and our community, political and business leaders to do the same.

Judy Slatyer,
Australia Red Cross CEO

ROAD REST STOP

Peter Anderson (*The Times* letters, November 10), my reason for putting forward a ridiculous proposition was to replace a more ridiculous proposition. My aim? Not spend six to 10 thousand dollars per year over three years to remove trees on a corner of land. (Yankalilla, end of Waitpinga and the Range roads). To create a rest stop and parking bay for travellers en route on an increasingly busy tourist road. All to save the expenditure of valuable rates for no gain, in an area where there is no sign showing road name Waitpinga Rd. A location where rural families are fortunate to get a dirt road graded. I believed the money be spent on some humble necessities such as these.

As for caravan parks they have some quiet times as we all do in business and the grey nomads do spend time in parks and where ever they feel the need to stop. Hey soon council will be offering free electric car chargers. Give me a ring any time love a chat Oopsy 0407 727 031. My opinion, not council's.

Peter Charles,
Victor Harbor

Letters to the editor: Letter to the editor must be 250 words or less, and photos must be at least one megabyte in size. To submit a letter or photo of the week email victortimes@fairfaxmedia.com.au.

COLUMN | LORRAINE MCLOUGHLIN



Do not leave your canvas blank

A FRAID of scribbling on that perfect white page? Cowed by a huge gap between the idea and its actual expression? Artists have the same problem with a blank canvas as they attempt to catch faces, landscapes or abstractions. Pianists and singers also fall short of their ideals. Tennis players might need to overcome a troublesome serve to make the team.

Yet many people never find out if they can follow a dream because they don't dare start. Excuses are easier to access: too untalented, busy, old, or unwell.

A wise dictum shocks: if a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing badly, particularly

when we begin. But to follow creative yearning, start we must, wherever and whenever we can, regardless of time restraints, money limitations, creaking arthritis or passing another significant birthday.

Have a go. If you write, get something down, then, having captured the spirit of the impulse, edit and re-edit.

You can't fix an unstarted manuscript; your backhand won't improve unless you drill it often; drawing takes daily repetition and scrunched attempts; pianists need to practice scales and short pieces before tackling larger works.

And what if, after trying and working, you don't seem to have much talent. If you love

it, keep doing it, with the time, resources and talent you have. Don't be half-hearted but drop your standards. You don't need to be a concert pianist or a Wimbledon finalist, sing like Leonard Cohen, or win great art and literature prizes.

A dilettante others might say, a dabbler, but too bad. If YOU are relishing creating, learning new skills and satisfying a yearning to make and do, go for it with gusto.

And if practice leads to success and riches, enjoy the rewards of your endeavours.

Lorraine McLoughlin is an author and is involved in community literary events in the Yankalilla District. For more see www.fitzmc.com