

Abandoned carts foul Crescent City

March 12, 2023



“I’m sickened by the sight of (shopping) carts littered all over Crescent City Del Norte County.”

Those were the words of Mario Westphal of Crescent City.

The retired paramedic and his wife Jeannie donated several hours, two Saturdays ago to retrieve illegally removed carts abandoned on community streets, loading the carts on their personal flatbed trailer and returning the convenience carts back to the store owner.

“The illegal expropriation of shopping carts for personal use has a cascade of negative effects on our community,” said Westphal. “First. It’s a theft. Each shopping cart ranges in the \$250-\$350 cost per cart.

“It is your responsibility to return the cart to the store. If you decide to keep the cart, you’ve committed a theft. Inevitably, these carts end abandoned or simply destroyed on the streets, vacant lots, riverbeds and behind our beautiful trees. It’s an eyesore. Stores simply pass the costs of replacing these stolen carts with higher costs to the consumer on existing inventory.”

Westphal expressed frustration with the Board of Supervisors and Crescent City Council.

Westphal challenges supervisors and councilors to get out in their district and help stabilize this eyesore rather than just attend meetings twice a month.

Del Norte County ordinance matches state law and holds the retailer responsible for retrieving the wayward carts.

“Today. My wife and I retrieved a dozen carts and returned seven to Walmart and five to Safeway,” Westphal said.

The Westphals hope to set the example tolerating abandoned carts on streets is a blight to Crescent City.