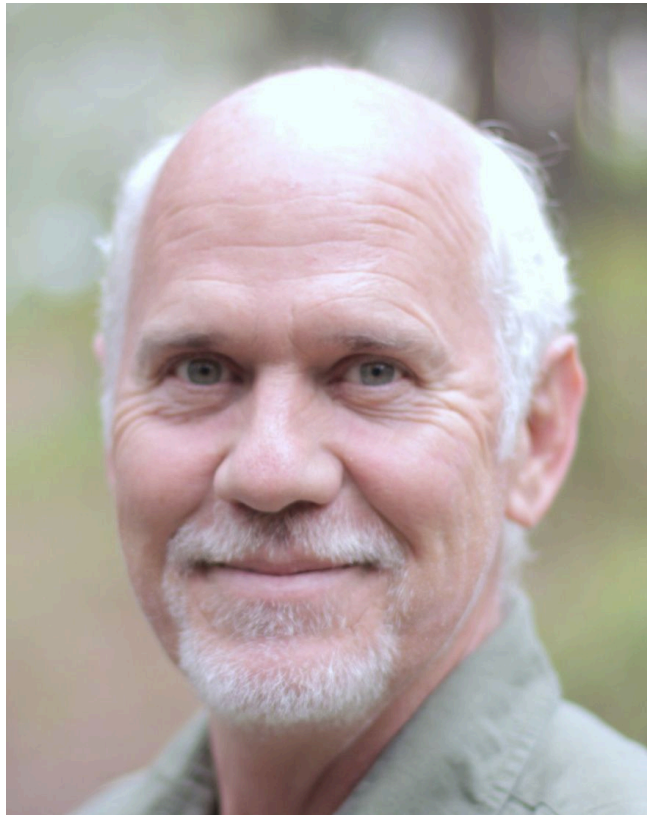


View from the Left: Should Gitlin Be Neutered?

February 21, 2023



Recently Roger Gitlin's incoherent ramblings have careened from uninformed opinion to destructive disinformation. Of course, my headline "Should Gitlin Be Neutered?" is not to be taken literally, I do suggest that Gitlin needs to have his wings clipped.

Clearly the owners of the Del Norte Triplicate have a different opinion on this. I learned on Tuesday (2/14/23) that Roger Gitlin has been elevated to Associate Editor of the Del Norte Triplicate.

This information came after my column was finished so I submitted my column as is, with a footnote.

Today I will focus on one of Gitlin's recent stories titled, "Spay Neuter Clinic Faces Serious Questions."

I was concerned this might be old news by the time I had a chance to respond, but Gitlin doubled down last week in his column and editorializes on his made-up controversy from the prior week.

The headline for this story should have been, "\$385,200 Grant Awarded to Underfunded Local Spay and Neuter Program." Instead of celebrating the grant, Gitlin demeans the Humane Society of Del Norte (HSDN), obsesses over a question about a veterinarian's credentials, and quibbles over tribal sovereignty.

Gitlin incorrectly made the accusation that Dr. Peavy, the founder of the non-profit agency Public Vet, performed local surgeries without proper licensing. The truth is that a different vet who is licensed provided these services.

Gitlin claims that “several Pub Vet clients have posted concerns on social media, and a few contacted The Triplicate to investigate the allegations.” When Gitlin says “The Triplicate” he is referring to himself. He doesn’t cite any official enforcement agency that is alleging violations. This is all Gitlin as plaintiff, judge and jury.

Thank goodness for the Wild Rivers Outpost and Jessica Cejnar Andrews who wrote an excellent, factual, and professional news story about this topic with the headline, “After Receiving Complaints, Mobile Vet Pulls the Plug on Spay Neuter Clinic, Potentially Putting a DN Humane Society Grant in Jeopardy.” (2/10/23 wilddrivers.lostcostoutpost.com)

The following are a few details that will correct Gitlin’s falsehoods and underscore the damage done by his disinformation.

According to the Wild Rivers Outpost, “Peavy’s daughter, Dr. Aria Armendariz, has a California license and is the veterinarian the Humane Society has contracted with to perform the surgeries at its spay-neuter clinics this year... Armendariz said in a Jan. 22 Facebook post that the February clinics in Del Norte County were canceled because she felt uncomfortable working in a community where so much hate and hostility has been raised...The need in Del Norte is great, but I am not going to be able to assist at this time.”

In response to Gitlin’s animosity and intimidation, the Humane Society has cancelled their February spay/neuter clinic. Is this the outcome he wanted?

It is unfair that Gitlin can spew his vitriol on the front page while those who are unfairly criticized are hamstrung to tell their side of the story. Gitlin’s personal attacks on Humane Society staff are indefensible. I can help provide another perspective on this.

I will amplify a few comments from Facebook posts by Eileen Bennet, Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Humane Society of Del Norte. Eileen is also the shelter manager, adoption coordinator, webmaster, and grant writer. Danielle Larson-Wheeler is the Board President, shelter volunteer, spay/neuter coordinator, and event coordinator. This is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that doesn’t deserve Gitlin’s attacks.

I will give Ms. Bennet the last word. Please read to the end.

Eileen Bennet’s response to Gitlin story (2/3/23)

“Roger Gitlin reached out to us hoping to get an interview for the Triplicate. He made it seem as if he wanted to tour our shelter, learn about what we do, and he congratulated us on the grant we received for our spay & neuter program. Below is the friendly email.

Good morning, Danielle:

I'd like to arrange a tour of the Humane Society facility and learn about your Mission. It's my understanding you've just been awarded a grant to conduct a spay and neuter program. Congratulations. Please let me know when we can meet. Thank you.

Danielle set the meeting with Mr. Gitlin and was expecting something totally different than what she experienced. I could be wrong, but I think of a journalist or a reporter as someone who is responsible for researching and writing informational news articles and stories about real events using a fair and unbiased perspective.

Their duties include interviewing experts, gathering first-hand accounts of events, and organizing an outline into a cohesive, interesting story. Mr. Gitlin came into the meeting with preconceived notions and like a head-hunter looking to start a lynch mob!

We knew the article that would be published would most likely not be a fair one, as Mr. Gitlin didn't even let Danielle finish a full sentence. Some of his questions should have been directed to the vet that was the subject of his article.

I received notice in November 2022 that my California for All Animals grant proposal had been selected for funding and we were being awarded three years of funding. The full grant equals \$385,200.

This is the largest grant I've ever applied for and to receive it was mind-blowing! This new grant will allow us to say "Yes, we can help!" This is great news for our community!

To say that we don't care about the animals is absurd! What we do requires endless hours of work, that we do as volunteers! Who would give up nights and weekends and every other available moment to do this work if they didn't care?

Danielle is one of the most kind-hearted, determined, hard-working, selfless women I know! I've never known anyone who gives of themselves like she does. It's inspiring and admirable to say the least.

We will continue to try to do our very best for this community's pets and for the unwanted, abandoned, and mistreated animals of our community. We will continue to help with setting spay/neuter appointments and assisting with the cost. We will continue to educate the public about responsible pet ownership. Despite the negativity."

Eileen Bennet's answers to Gitlin editorial "Full Disclosure" (2/10/23)

"QUESTION: Why hasn't the Humane Society utilized the services of the three licensed vets in Del Norte County or the two licensed vets in Curry County? ANSWER: We use ALL of the vets mentioned WHEN they have appointment space available to us!

QUESTION: Are we paying an unlicensed vet with grant funds? ANSWER: NO! The vet who is the topic of Mr. Gitlin's tirade was not the vet doing our surgeries.

Any questions about controlled substances cannot be answered by me or by HSDN. These are questions that need to be asked of the vet/vets.

Any licensing questions need to be directed to the vet who was scheduled to perform our surgeries. Dr. Peavy is not that vet.

Mr. Gitlin's last sentence, "Full Disclosure equates to honesty and credibility." Words to live by Mr. Gitlin! We can stand behind that sentence, can you? You sir are neither honest nor credible!"

Footnote: If you are reading this, then my column has not been cut yet. However, if my column does not show up in future publications, know that this was not my choice. If the Triplicate starts censoring or editing my column I will stop contributing.

If you wish to express an opinion on Roger Gitlin's promotion to Associate Editor, email the publisher David Thornberry dthornberry@countrymedia.net

Kevin Hendrick is the Chair of the Del Norte County Democratic Central Committee - dndems@gmail.com