

To the Editor:

Regarding the killing of deer, Councilman John Naser wants the chance to "finish what they started" before his term in office runs out. Unless the city plans to exterminate the entire deer herd, that will not be possible. This is because what the city "started" was following the DNR's advice to shoot deer until the phone stops ringing and if the complaints don't stop, shoot some more. The DNR of course also suggested the city follow the deer task force recommendations and try to increase its citizen's social tolerance for wildlife. Unfortunately the 70 people who called day after day to demand the council kill deer, won out. One only has to do a bit of research to realize that culling deer is a never ending exercise in futility. The only thing that ends up being thinned is your wallet as they will waste your tax dollars year after year. Thinning a herd in an area the size of the city results in more and more deer due to the compensatory rebound effect. This is why towns all over the country have stopped trying to play God with nature and have learned to coexist with wildlife instead.

It is a shame that several council members continue to be stuck in a thought process where the only solution is to hire sharpshooters. Is this a time to throw money at a problem that can't be solved by culling? Especially since many citizens have come forward with all sorts of solutions and alternatives. Trial gardens are being planted with the help of Master Gardeners and MSU. Electric fences, which are used all over out east to keep wildlife out of yards, are proving effective here and should be allowed. Traffic solutions that include new wildlife migration signage are being considered as deer/vehicle statistics are being studied. The Defenders of Urban Wildlife has a link on every page of their web site for citizens to e-mail them with human/wildlife conflict issues. They are working with MSU and other experts and are finding solutions.
<http://www.defendurbanwildlife.org>.

Our area does not need to choose between vibrant gardens and wildlife. Call or e-mail your local leaders today and ask that they make a record of your call. Insist that they follow the lead of other green towns and cities by preserving habitat while working toward solving wildlife issues in more creative and fiscally responsible ways.