

OPINION

# The Starlink dilemma

BY SHA'ANA FINEBERG, PHD

Some decisions are hard, like choosing between convenience (giving immediate benefits) and health, which, when lost, supersedes almost everything else.

Sun radiation can cause skin cancer. X-rays require lead shielding. What a dilemma if we discover that radiation from satellite internet (Wi-Fi, smart devices) contributes to nerve and brain disorders, cancer, infertility.

Concern arises when a federal agency's members come from or retire to lucrative jobs within the industry they are meant to regulate, e.g., the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ([bit.ly/3SPekv2](http://bit.ly/3SPekv2)). The telecommunications industry's decisions depend upon knowing what level of electromagnetic frequency (EMF) radiation is safe for humans. All FCC technology approvals are based upon a 1996 "safety level." In 2021 a DC federal court concluded that the FCC was "arbitrary and capricious" in ignoring thousands of scientific studies that should have led to a rigorous re-examination of this supposed "safety" level ([bit.ly/3QmO89b](http://bit.ly/3QmO89b)); (short video: [bit.ly/3zUomCq](http://bit.ly/3zUomCq)). It may finally become obvious, as it is to Democratic senator Richard Blumenthal, in a 2019 post, that the current technology is harmful to human life ([bit.ly.co/DoJM](http://bit.ly.co/DoJM)).

Recently a telecommunications industry representative testified to Congress that the industry has not financed one single safety study for 5G frequencies—obviously, none regarding long-term

impacts ([bityl.co/DoJP](http://bityl.co/DoJP)). According to the Telecommunications Act it is illegal for a locality to argue against EMF radiation of citizens on the basis of health ([bityl.co/DoJQ](http://bityl.co/DoJQ)). What a true dilemma if we realize that we are harming ourselves with conveniences upon which we have become dependent.

The Applegate Valley has been a safe haven, where one can still live a healthy lifestyle. We're too small for high frequency 5G to benefit the industry. We've been relatively protected from excessive EMF radiation ... until satellites.

Starlink is "beta-testing" in our latitude. If folks in Applegate Valley partake, they support satellite beams aimed at us. Do we really want to contribute to bathing our valley with this EMF radiation? (Children's brains are most vulnerable: [bityl.co/DoJS](http://bityl.co/DoJS)). Is there another way to get our internet needs met—maybe less conveniently, but healthier? So far, I believe fiber optic is the safest, fastest, and most reliable.

Getting Starlink is not a small decision. What the satellites provide, along with 5G frequency, is the infrastructure for things like facial recognition. Our wonderful valley may no longer be the safe haven we treasure.

This poses a true dilemma, since some folks certainly suffer without reliable internet at home.

It is time to do some soul searching about one's values and priorities.

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NEWS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

# A hot opportunity! Positions available on the Applegater Board of Directors

BY DIANA COOGLE

The Applegater Board of Directors had a daylong retreat last month, beginning at Cantrall Buckley Park and continuing at Red Lily Winery. Under the excellent mediation of Claudia Beausoleil, we talked about our vision for the next five years and about our upcoming Gater-est Show on Earth (see page 1) and, among other things, about our need for new board members because we were very sorry to hear that we are losing three board members in coming months.

Dave Dobbs has been our indispensable treasurer for about 10 years. He has been sharp as a tack in pricking us when we need to raise funds and in keeping up with tax matters, ad revenue, NewsMatch requirements, bookkeeping, and other financial affairs. Dave was also always stepping up to help at events, find raffle items, create banners, and do numerous other tasks that crop up in a nonprofit organization. There was no one better at snagging people for donations, ads, or other help, either. We will miss him.

Mike Schneider joined the board in January 2021 and immediately created a position for himself that now we can't do without. He became our ad manager, and the increase in ads in the paper is due in no small part to his work with the ad reps. He has served the board with dedication for the duration of his time, and we will miss him.

Jessica Bullard, who joined the board in 2020, was that all-important member-at-large—reliable, always present at meetings,

ready with a thoughtful insight, willing to do what she could wherever we needed help. Jessica, too, will be missed.

So now, or, at least, soon, we find ourselves a three-member board: Bert, our editor; Lisa, our secretary; and me, chair. To be a legal board, according to our by-laws, we need at least one more member; to be a viable board, we need at least three more members. To be a functioning board, we need a treasurer.

This, of course, is where you come in, or where I hope you'll come in. Join us on the Applegater Board of Directors. We have a good time, we work hard, and we enjoy working with each other to serve the community in this way.

As a board member, your commitment is to come to monthly meetings in the Applegate (no chore; lots of fun), help with fundraising, and, as on any board, be willing to do what needs to be done.

Anyone who lives in the Applegate can be a board member. We would especially like to have someone from Williams or the lower Applegate at the west end of the watershed. We especially need a treasurer.

If you are interested in seeing what the position is all about, contact me (at once!). You aren't making a commitment by inquiring, and (really!) I won't rope you in, out of desperation, without your approval.

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Opinion pieces. Limited to 500 words; no images. Opinion pieces submitted by the same person will not be run consecutively. Responses to previously published opinion pieces will not be published. Must include publishable contact information (phone number and/or email address).

Letters. Limited to 200 words; must be signed, with a full street address or PO Box and phone number. Only the writer's name and hometown will be published.

**Anonymous letters and opinion pieces, reprinted articles, press releases, and political campaign articles will not be published.** Individual letters and opinion pieces may or may not be published. All submissions will be edited for grammar and length.

Email opinion pieces and letters to [gater@applegater.org](mailto:gater@applegater.org) or mail to Applegater, Applegate Valley Community Newspaper, Inc., PO Box 14, Jacksonville, OR 97530.



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