)THE BSERVER <u>Opinion</u>

OUR VIEW

Courage in the face of COVID challenges

he COVID impact spotlight has rested rightfully - on the thousands of dedicated men and women in the state's medical system who have remained on the front lines of the pandemic for nearly two years.

Their commitment has been a mostly silent one. They've gone to work, completed their work, and grappled with the impact of watching people become very sick or die from the COVID-19 virus.

Their courage in the face of unprecedented upheaval should not be forgotten, but there is another group — teachers and educators across the region — who have, in some ways, escaped notice of the challenges they've faced and overcome since the pandemic kicked off.

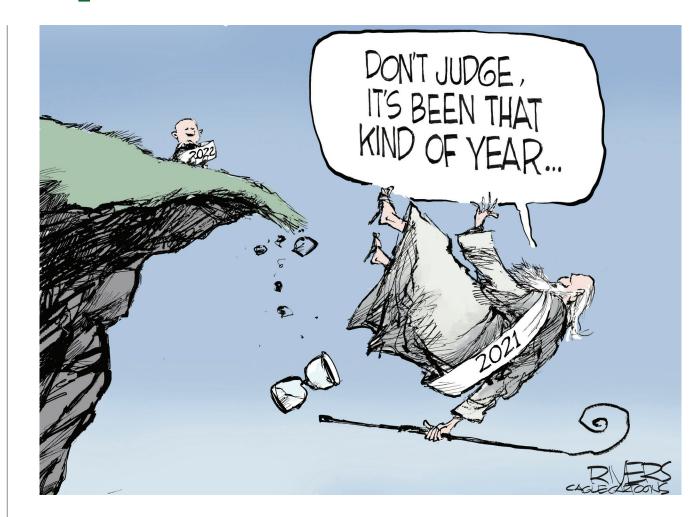
Our teachers, coaches and administrator have been in the spotlight as well, but usually for a very different reason. At specific times during the pandemic, the people we trust to educate our youth somehow ended up in the middle of a political debate regarding masks and the very severity of COVID-19 itself. For reasons that remain mysterious, teachers, coaches and administrators were tossed into the maelstrom of debate about COVID-19, often becoming the targets for decisions made at the state level they had no control over.

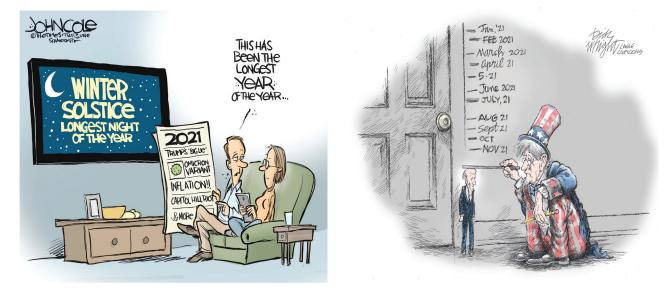
Our educators — through no fault of their own - also were forced to completely adjust the way they teach when schools were closed across the state because of COVID-19.

These men and women at local and regional schools faced an array of serious - and often disappointing - challenges with little room to maneuver.

The truth is teachers and administrators should never have become focal points of local angst about vaccines or whether COVID-19 is serious or even real.

Their job was a straightforward one — teach our youth to the best of their ability.





YOUR VIEWS

Why we withdrew our children from GRA

I am writing to tell our experience and concerns with the local private school Grande Ronde Academy. We enrolled our children in August. The first week our family got COVID. My husband became dependent on oxygen and we lost his father all within two weeks.

I am a teacher and understand the benefits of verbal learning, so we did my son's work verbally. She then accused me of cheating and sent him to the office.

Principal Johnson went out of his way to help us but lacked support and respect from the board.

The president of the board seemed to hear my concerns but be evaluated for credibility to be useful. Resolving this pandemic is obviously a work in progress.

Rejecting treatment modalities for not being 100% effective is a bit like looking for health insurance and deciding coverage up to \$5,000,000 would be necessary to cover any potential disaster. Therefore, if the only available policy is for just \$200,000, it would not be

When the COVID-19 mandates were handed down by Gov. Kate Brown, an entire way of teaching — etched into our collective consciousness for decades — evaporated overnight. That created huge challenges for teachers and administrators.

Our educators - just like our medical professionals — were not and are not searching for praise. They just want to do their jobs. Yet, it is fitting and right to point out their contributions and sacrifices during the past 18 or so months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We must not forget that our teachers and educators are part of our communities and deserve support during these challenging times.

EDITORIALS

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of The Observer editorial board. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of The Observer. LETTERS

 The Observer welcomes letters to the editor. We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We will not publish consumer complaints against businesses, personal attacks against private individuals or comments that can incite violence. We also discourage thank-you letters. • Letters should be no longer than 350 words and must be signed and carry the author's name, address and phone number (for verification only). We will not publish

anonymous letters. Letter writers are limited to one letter every two weeks. Longer community comment columns, such as Other Views, must be no more than 700 words. Writers must provide a recent headshot and a one-sentence biography. Like letters to the editor, columns must refrain from complaints against businesses or personal attacks against private individuals. Submissions must carry the author's name, address and phone number.

 Submission does not guarantee publication, which is at the discretion of the editor.

SEND LETTERS TO:

letters@lagrandeobserver.com or via mail to Editor, 911 Jefferson Ave., La Grande, OR 97850

Our 8-year-old son missed two weeks because his class was quarantined. He was home when his papa passed and was there as they worked on him. His teacher showed him no grace. She never reached out to us to discuss the trauma our son experienced and when approached she wouldn't talk to us. She demanded every last assignment to be done right away. We were not mentally or emotionally capable of doing that and had been advised by counselors to not push him due to his ADHD, anxiety and trauma.

When asked why she didn't reach out she replied, "I don't know you, why should I?"

no action was taken. No apology was received. At the public board meeting they discussed how new people corrupt their school.

Since we are new and our son has a true fear of his teacher, we chose to no longer "corrupt" their school. **Elise Stevens** Union

Resolving pandemic is a work in progress

Thanks for all of the comments about the COVID-19 pandemic. The more information we receive about a problem, the higher the likelihood of finding an effective solution. Of course, each bit of data must

worth the time, effort or expense to have.

In addition to finding the shortcomings of certain treatments, we should each formulate what could be helpful in solving this problem and try to implement those ideas. In addition to the unbelievable death toll and disruption of lives, our medical system is being overwhelmed, making it difficult or impossible not only to treat those with COVID but to provide help for other serious illnesses and injuries.

May all of mankind soon have relief from this pandemic.

Dr. Richard Haddock La Grande

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

221

U.S. PRESIDENT

Joe Biden The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, DC 20500 Comments: 202-456-1111

GOVERNOR

Kate Brown 160 State Capitol 900 Court St. Salem, OR 97301-4047 503-378-4582

NATORS

Jeff Merkley 313 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 202-224-3753 Pendleton office: 541-278-1129

REPRESENTATIVES

News clerk

Multimedia journalist

Reporter

Bobby Levy, District 58 900 Court St. NE, H-376 Salem, OR 97301 503-986-1458 Rep.BobbyLevy@state.or.us

Grea Smith, District 57 900 Court St. NE, H-482 Salem, OR 97301 503-986-1457 Rep.GregSmith@state.or.us

Regional publisher. Karrine Brogoitti

Interim editor Andrew Cutler

ReporterDick Mason

.....Lisa Lester Kelly

.... Alex Wittwer

.....Davis Carbaugh

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

Cliff Bentz

2185 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-6730 Medford office: 541-776-4646

SENATOR

Bill Hansell, District 29 900 Court St. NE, S-415 Salem, OR 97301 503-986-1729 Sen.BillHansell@state.or.us

STAFF

Home delivery advisor Amanda Fredrick Advertising representative Kelli Craft Advertising representative Amy Horn National accounts coordinator Devi Mathson Graphic design Dorothy KautzAndy Nicolais Page design



SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE

NEWSSTAND PRICE: \$1.50 You can save up to 55% off the single-copy price with home delivery. Call 800-781-3214 to subscribe.

<u> </u>		
Subscri	ption	rates:

Monthly Autopay	\$10.75
13 weeks	\$37.00
26 weeks	\$71.00
52 weeks	\$135.00

BSERVER An independent newspaper founded in 1896

www.lagrandeobserver.com

Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, Oregon 97801 Published Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays (except postal holidays) by EO Media Group, 911 Jefferson Ave., La Grande, OR 97850 (USPS 299-260)

The Observer retains ownership and copyright protection of all staff-prepared news copy, advertising copy, photos and news or ad illustrations. They may not be reproduced without explicit prior approval.

COPYRIGHT © 2021

Phone: 541-963-3161

Toll free (Oregon): 1-800-781-3214

Email: news@lagrandeobserver.com

POSTMASTER Send address changes to: The Observer, 911 Jefferson Ave., La Grande, OR 97850

La Grande office: 541-962-7691

	U.S. SEI
	Ron Wyden
l	Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
	Washington, DC 20510

202-224-5244