

OPINION

theAstorian

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Founded in 1873

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GUEST COLUMN

We are going to get through this

As a community, we’ve gone through a lot together to do our part in flattening the coronavirus infection curve.

From individuals practicing physical distancing and businesses adapting to state guidelines, to our amazing front-line workers ensuring that essential operations continue, the pandemic has touched every person in our community.

Through our collective action, we have limited the spread of the coronavirus in the area, but there is a second curve we need to plan for. Now we need to prepare for the next curve of mental health disruption which comes with weeks of quarantine and the economic fallout of this pandemic.



AMY BAKER

I hear the sadness, the anger and the stress in people’s voices when they talk about what’s been lost. I also hear fear for what comes next.

Living in and through a pandemic is taking a toll on us individually and collectively. Our country is grieving the loss of our former lives and we are all in different stages of grief. So much of our focus has been directed towards how to protect ourselves physically from the coronavirus, we need to ensure we are also taking steps to protect our mental well-being.

You may be experiencing an increase in general anxiety or worry. Or perhaps you are experiencing more extreme



The crisis respite center in Warrenton.

Colin Murphey/The Astorian

TO EACH OF YOU, REGARDLESS IF
YOUR RESPONSE IS MILD OR MORE INTENSE,
LET ME SAY THAT YOUR FEELINGS ARE VALID
AND YOU ARE NOT ALONE. TRY TO FIND
PATIENCE WITH YOURSELF AND OTHERS.

feelings of panic and despair. To each of you, regardless if your response is mild or more intense, let me say that your feelings are valid and you are not alone. Try to find patience with yourself and others.

Regardless if you have never sought help for your mental wellness in the past, or if you engage in daily practices to improve and maintain your mental health, now is the time to become an even more diligent advocate for

yourself, your loved ones and your community.

While we’ve never done this before, navigating these murky waters is something we will do as a community. Just like in the aftermath of the storm of 2007, it means as a community we come together, neighbors helping neighbors, to care for and support one another.

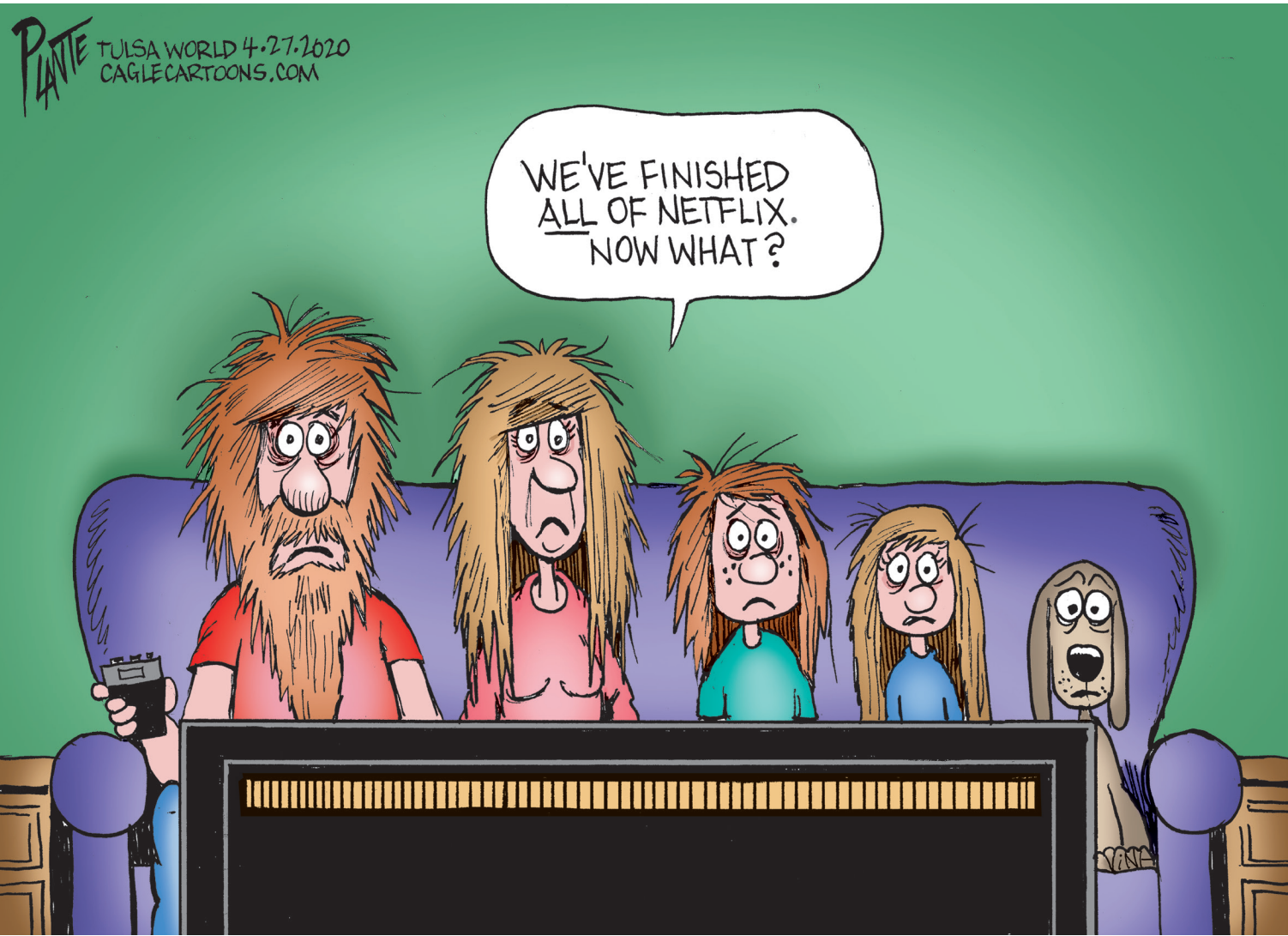
The spirit and resilience of this community is fierce. To address the mental wellness need, the impacts of physical distancing and loss that we are experiencing, we need that same can-do spirit.

The shame associated with intense emotions is a real and terrible barrier for some to seek help. Your encouragement and acknowledgement that these feelings are normal in this time can mean all the difference in the world. We are all in this together, and support is available.

We at Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare are here for you if you just need to talk, if you need to vent, cry, problem solve, or if you simply need to connect with another human being. Call us today at 503-325-5722. If you are worried about someone else, you can call us about that, too.

We may not know exactly when this pandemic will end, but it will. Remember to take each day one step at a time, and to support one another as we all make our way through this. We really are all in this together, and together we are going to get through this.

Amy Baker is executive director of Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare.



LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Astorian. Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must include the writer’s name, address and phone number. You will be contacted to confirm authorship. All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar and factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are allowed each month. Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand, and, rather than mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed. Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at bit.ly/astorianletters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or 1555 North Roosevelt in Seaside, or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR., 97103.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Happening to us

We have our life and death. We have our political and social problems. But unless you were in one of the wars in a faraway place, real disasters happen to other people in other countries.

They have their wars, starvation and disease, and we look at it like a picture show. This happens to other unfortunate people, not us — but now it’s happening to us. Social isolation, empty shelves and isolation are new experiences.

To me, we seem to be doing well on the West Coast. I also feel we can become stronger as a nation through overcoming this nasty bug. Together we will do it, and show our psychological and physical strength.

Thank you — medical workers, security, clerks and all who work in this hostile environment — thank you.

NORM HOOGE
Astoria

Looking good

A big “thank you” to Ted Ames for the wonderful job he does maintaining Ocean View Cemetery in Warrenton. I have never seen the cemetery look this good.

He has made vast improvements. It’s obvious to see he enjoys his job, and does it with such great detail and respect to the

families. We are so lucky to have him on this job.

Thank you, Ted. We greatly appreciate what you do, and we notice.

ROBIN GOLUBICKAS
Warrenton

Seaside’s blessing

Right from the beginning, and still, as this pandemic crisis continues, I have heard only one voice on the radio giving directions. This man is truly a leader and caretaker of Seaside’s children and others.

Jason Boyd is the assistant principal of Seaside High School and that voice. His directions over the radio made it possible for not just the children under his care, but others, to get a meal. In some cases, the only meal.

I am saying “thank you” for them, and bless you.

TROY HASKELL
Astoria

Amazed

I’m so thankful to be surrounded by so many smart people. It amazes me how so many who aren’t walking in President Donald Trump’s shoes know just how to run this country better than he is.

This man can’t seem to do anything right, according to some people. I know I

heard Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders say they wouldn’t have closed down flights from China when Trump did. Wow, where would we be then?

It’s time that we pull together as Americans. We don’t need to focus on hate and resentment. Like it or not, President Trump has done a good job for this country. If you don’t like Trump, get over it.

Vote in November. I will respect whoever is elected, even if I didn’t vote for them. It’s about the office they hold; I was raised that way. I still put my hand over my heart when the flag passes. It stands for those who fought for the freedoms we enjoy and abuse.

You can disagree with me. I won’t call you names or hit you. This is America — we can agree to disagree. Isn’t that better than the hatred we are hearing all the time?

I will pray for Trump and Biden and America, that we turn our eyes back to the Lord and thank him for his forgiveness. God bless America, and God bless you.

DENICE DAVIS
Hammond

Together

Thanks to everyone following Gov. Kate Brown’s stay-at-home order. I am grateful for your willingness to do whatever it takes to keep us safe from the novel coronavirus.

Most Oregonians support the stay-at-

home order, despite financial, emotional and other hardships. We’re following good safety practices because we care about ourselves and about the people we might accidentally infect. Scientists have learned that the virus could kill more people ages 35 to 64 than both cancer and heart disease.

As costly as this pandemic is to our economy, research shows that it would be far more costly to reopen too soon. When we finally do open up, we’ll want to feel safe. If we think we’re still at risk, it’s doubtful we’ll go out to eat, go shopping or even get our much-needed haircuts.

Let’s continue doing what we’re doing so we prevent more virus spread and save lives. Let’s not open up too soon, only to lose all the benefit we’ve gained.

Please urge Gov. Brown and your city and county councilors and commissioners to continue to follow the state’s thoughtful guidelines, based on expert science. Let’s get through this together.

LAURIE CAPLAN
Astoria

Waiting for a wreck

I stopped watching the presidential coronavirus press briefings. It’s one thing to stare at an accident site as you slowly drive past. It’s a whole other thing to park on the overpass every day, waiting for a wreck.

JIM HALLAUX
Astoria