

# OPINION

## Hood River News

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Subscription \$45 per year in Hood River trade area. \$71 outside trade area.



Printed on recycled paper.

Official Newspaper, City of Hood River and Hood River County  
Published Every Wednesday & Saturday by Hood River News,  
P.O. Box 390, Hood River Oregon 97031 • (541) 386-1234

San Diego Union-Tribune ©  
CREATORS.COM



LESS "I"  
AND MORE "US."



## Our Readers Write

### Next time

After reading the new parking regulations for downtown Hood River, I can now embrace doing my taxes with the simplicity of the IRS rules and regulations. The next time I go downtown, I'll park in Odell and walk.

**Al Brown**  
Hood River

### 'Good food for thought'

Will you please stop giving candy to my kid! Call me a downer, a party pooper, an over-reactive parent, call me whatever you want, just please stop giving my kids candy without my permission! Between two and three days a week, my daughter is getting between 10 and 18 grams from sources I don't approve of at school and at her after school activities. At home, I'm striving to make sure those 25 grams (the upper limit as defined by the World Health Organization and the American Heart Association) come from naturally sweet sources like whole fruits and veggies, the honey on her morning toast, and maybe a touch of juice from time to time.

I might want to treat my child to a girl scout cookie ... but when she arrives home having been given 18-plus grams already — what am I to do? Too bad for the parents who are actually watching sugar intake. And even worse for the parents who aren't. Don't forget that the food our children eat affects their behavior and by rewarding with candy, we are supplying students with the wrong nutrition and the wrong message. Stop ingratiating yourself to my child by giving them candy because then she gets mad at mom who takes it away. Stop giving candy for when they behave well, because then she asks me for candy at home when she behaves well. It's a vicious cycle! I'm tired of asking people to not give my kid candy and then my kid gets left out. Because if she gets a stick-

er or an extra high five instead of a lollipop, how does that make her feel?

People shouldn't be distributing candy without permission. Now that is good food for thought! If this "rant" resonates with you, I would encourage you to delicately remind your children's caring coaches, terrific teachers, awesome activity leaders, the very kind bank tellers, etc., to please not offer candy as a reward or a treat. I appreciate every caring adult in my child's life, and my child loves you with or without candy.

**Nicole Goode**  
Hood River

### Wishful thinking

We learned this week that Vice President Pence would be leading the administration's efforts to address the coronavirus outbreak. What great news — like many of you, I take comfort in knowing that we now have a leadership team at the helm of the ship of state, steering us through the rocky shoals of a potential pandemic. The nation can relax, knowing that the professionals are in charge.

Well, maybe. Don't plan the parade yet. Because in true Trumpian fashion, news has leaked that more than a dozen federal workers were deployed to greet the first group of Americans evacuated from China, and they were detailed without proper training and personal protective equipment. At the conclusion of their assignment, these workers returned to normal duties, some taking commercial flights in order to return to their homes. It doesn't take an epidemiologist to figure out that the potential for introducing the virus into the continental U.S. has just increased dramatically.

We know of this because a decorated senior official with the Department of Health and Human Services filed a whistleblower complaint that documented the flaws of the initiative. And she was rewarded for speaking out with demands for her reassignment or possible termination, another victim of

Trump's insistence on absolute loyalty.

I thought that perhaps we had seen the worst of the administration's behavior. And that maybe this would finally prompt GOP enablers to call out the corruption and incompetence that are the hallmarks of the Trump presidency.

But if it didn't happen with other instances of ineptitude, it's probably wishful thinking to believe that this time will be different.

Let's hope that they get lucky and we dodge the pandemic bullet. Because luck may be the only thing protecting us as long as this team is in charge.

**Larry Jacoby**  
Hood River

### Free seeds this weekend

I would like to remind people that we can grow our own food easily with more health benefits and with less cost, in any location that has soil, sun and water — even if it is a small area in your yard.

Free seeds are available this weekend. It says seed swap but really it is free seeds being given to all community members.

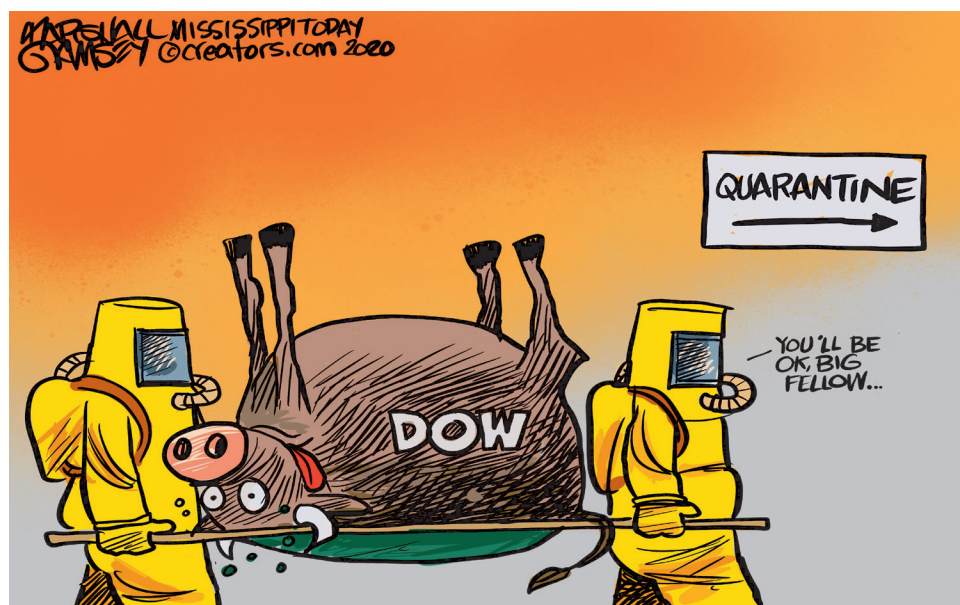
From the website: "Rockford Grangers are gearing up for the seventh Seed Share on March 7, 2-5 p.m., and plan to offer a big selection of seeds once again (all free) with a special focus on locally adapted varieties."

That's where you come in! Do you have seeds saved from last year? Or leftover bought seeds you would be willing to share? Perhaps you know other growers with extra seeds?

Or maybe you are making a seed order online or from a catalogue and are in a position to buy some extras to share.

However you can help with our Seed Roundup will be much appreciated. Just bring your seeds on the day, labeled with variety, when gathered, where grown and any other growing info. We will also have extra packets/labels available as usual.

Of course, we hope you'll come whether or not you have



seeds to share.

This year, we are asking for a \$5 suggested donation at the door, which will be waived if you have seeds to contribute. (No one turned away for lack of funds of course.)

Thank you for helping build local resilience, and we look forward to seeing you on the day!

Rockford Grange 2-5 p.m. on Saturday, March 7; info@Rockfordgrange.net; 4262 Barrett Drive, Hood River.

**Kim Stolte**  
Hood River

### 'No crisis'

In the article in the Hood River News on Feb. 26, 2020, "Earth Day Oregon adds partners," the founder of this, Bethany Shetterly Thomas, makes a statement. She is quoted as saying, "The climate crisis requires swift and collective action."

In response to this, I say that there is no crisis and no action is needed to reduce carbon dioxide, since man-caused carbon dioxide is very minimal and has negligible influence on climate. Climate has changed without man's influence.

Time, energy, recourses, money and freedoms would be wasted on this false premise.

**Donald Rose**  
Hood River

### Walkout halts progress

Well, state Republicans did it again. All but one Republican legislator each in the House and in the Senate walked out of the legislature because of the revised climate cap-and-trade bill.

In the past, I never saw minority party members regularly pick up their marbles and go home (or in this case, elsewhere) when they didn't like a particular piece of legislation. Oregon's Republican legislators' motto seems to be "It's our way or the highway." That's not the way democracy in this country is supposed to work.

And, amazingly, the absentees will still be paid. Imagine if you decided not to go to work; would you still get paid? Also, thanks to the absentees' walkout, the Legislature can't even close the legislative session early to save us taxpayers money because it doesn't have a quorum to do so.

According to the Oregonian, the upshot of the Republicans' walkout is to halt progress on a myriad of other bills, including up to \$12 million in Umatilla flood recovery funds; funding for homelessness, mental health, foster children, people with disabilities, and wildfire prevention; requiring free school breakfast to be offered to more than 100,000 children;

and bonding for building improvements and expansion at all of Oregon's public universities.

Bills that don't clear both chambers by March 8 will die and remaining bills will likely be stalled until the 2021 legislative session.

The Republicans who walked out represent 36 percent of Oregon by population, according to the Census Bureau's most recent estimates, from 2014 to 2019. So, if state Republicans don't like being in the minority, perhaps they should consider adopting new ideas that a larger percentage of Oregonians can support.

I respect the two Republicans, Rep. Cheri Helt and Sen. Tim Knopp, for staying in Salem to do their job. Even if they don't support the cap-and-trade legislation they show maturity and leadership by honoring their oath of office. Sadly, you can't say that for Sen. Chuck Thomsen.

**Tracie Hornung**  
Parkdale

### 'Tails wagging'

I liken the ending of these Democratic debates to the ending of the Little Bo Peep poem; leave them alone and let them come home, wagging their tails behind them.

**Alan Winans**  
Hood River

## ANOTHER VOICE

# Don't just worry about coronavirus, do something

By **DR. JEFF HORACEK AND HEATHER NEILSON**  
Healthy Connections

Like many of you, we have been reading reports of the spread of COVID-19 (Corona Virus Infectious Disease 2019) with increasing concern.

At our internal and functional medicine practice in Hood River, we've been thinking about how to help our community be as prepared as possible with strategies beyond hand washing and worrying. Basic public health prevention measures like hand washing, covering sneezes and coughs, staying home when sick, and frequently cleaning surfaces are all crucial and proven to be helpful in preventing spread of infections. But there is more we can do to make our bodies less hospitable to infections such as COVID-19. How we eat and live each day can boost our immune response to this or any virus.

So, what can we do? First,

let's review some basic immunology to understand how our body's brilliant design regularly defends us from all sorts of assaults in our world.

Broadly speaking, there are two branches of our immune system to fight infections: The Innate Immune System and the Adaptive Immune System.

The Innate Immune System evolved over time and is our older defense strategy. Its purpose is to identify and remove foreign substances present in our body. This system acts quickly to target malignant cells and viruses. It also will activate our second system, the Adaptive Immune System, by presenting antigens (small pieces of a pathogen) to start the production of antibodies. These antibodies provide a short-term immune response to remove infections while also providing long-term memory to the Adaptive Immune System. This gives our bodies the knowledge to potentially fight infections in the future.

Several problems arise for people with compromised immune function — not just the elderly or frail. Other common conditions tax the immune system on a daily

basis, including: Dysbiosis (bacterial imbalances within the body, most commonly, our gut), chronic inflammation, autoimmunity, diabetes and (particularly for COVID 19) lung diseases, such as COPD. For these people, the adaptive response is likely not have enough "oomph" to overcome the foreign infection.

When we age, our ability to fight infection starts to decline. The body can compensate for this decline if there are adequate numbers of white blood cells that can directly kill infected cells. These killer cells can keep a virus from replicating in our bodies. So, what can we do to help our immune system function as well as possible in the face of a pandemic?

To boost our innate immune system, including our killer cells, the following lifestyle approaches can bring great benefit to our bodies. When we feel like so much is out of our control, these are things we can do that will re-

ally make a difference during this uncertain time.

- Consider tobacco cessation, especially with this virus targeting the lungs and respiratory system.
- Get adequate sleep. Our bodies repair and replenish during sleep.
- Limit sugar, processed foods and alcohol.
- Eat real food such as fruits and vegetables rich in phytonutrients.
- Find the "Goldilocks" activity for yourself. Too much exercise is a stress on the body and a challenge to the immune system. Mild to moderate exercise — especially if it reduces stress — helps increase resilience and immunity.
- Manage stress skillfully. Find time to be still, or at least to check in with your worries and fears.
- Limit your extracurricular activities to those that bring the most emotional nourishment to your life. Constant busy-ness is a stress itself.

▪ Consider specific immune-boosting supplements if approved by your physician or health care provider.

If you are already engaging in some of these practices, great work! If not, consider which of these will be the easiest for you to incorporate at this time. Making behavior changes can be hard, but these are times that require us to think and act with courage. There are no guarantees that these strategies will prevent COVID-19 or any other infection, but we find that taking control of the things that may help during stressful and fearful times can lend a sense of empowerment and comfort. And they just might give your immune system a fighting chance.

Jeff Horacek MD, is an internal and functional medicine physician and Heather Nielsen Horacek, LPC, is a counselor and wellness coach of Healthy Connections, Hood River.