

# OPINION

## Hood River News

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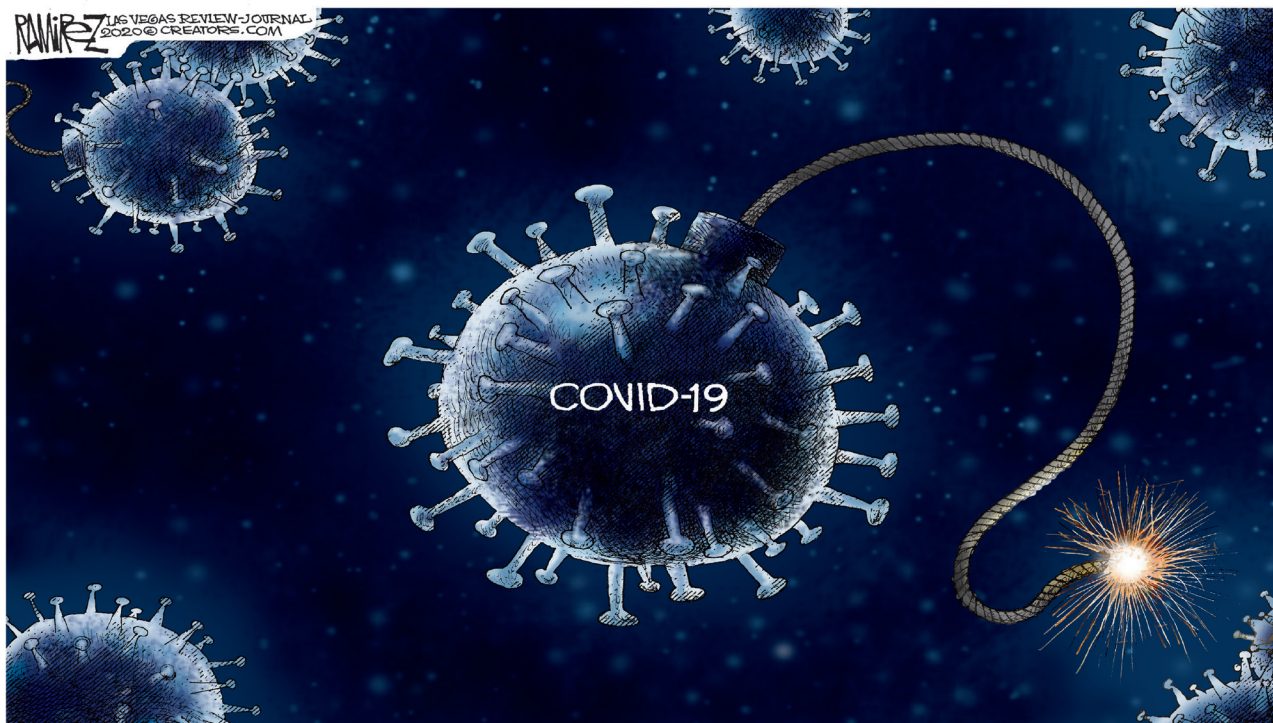


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## Our Readers Write

### Saving lives

I was the emergency physician on duty in the Hood River Emergency Department last month when the staff and I started hearing concerning information on the 911 scanner. There was someone downtown with an injury that was bleeding profusely. Hood River police were on the scene and EMS had been called for assistance. A short time later, Hood River Fire Department arrived with the patient who had indeed sustained an injury that was both life and limb threatening. However, the bleeding had been stopped by a well-placed military style tourniquet on the injured extremity. I was impressed! When informed that two Hood River police officers had applied the tourniquet, I was more impressed! To have this device available, the training to use it, and the competence to apply it correctly under very stressful conditions is commendable.

Congratulations to officers Juan Pulido and Gabe Wilson and the Hood River Police Department for a job well done!

Our job was not done, however. The patient needed to get to a trauma center in Portland and we could not keep the tourniquet on much longer. Tourniquets can be lifesaving, but they cut off the blood supply and can cause more injury if left in place too long. That's when we called our surgeon, Dr. Cory Johnston, to come and help. Dr. Johnston arrived within minutes and was able to calmly and expertly stitch enough of the lacerated muscle and blood vessels to enable us to remove the tourniquet and transfer the patient. That was the last case I shared with our friend and colleague, Dr. Johnston.

We in the Emergency Department have had the extreme privilege of knowing and working with Cory these years. He was an amazing surgeon and human being. Our hearts go out to his wife and family. He will be dearly, dearly missed.

**Karen O'Neill**  
Hood River

### Coronavirus

Thanks for the excellent medical advice to fight the Coronavirus ("Don't just worry about coronavirus, do something," by Dr. Jeff Horacek and Heather Neilson, Hood River News, March 4). This lifestyle will help us not only now, but in the future against new health threats, and also to feel better in the meantime. It is like America's investment in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance: Saving the lives of millions in our world and helping protect us locally against these and other diseases. Both of these initiatives also strengthen health care systems around the world. So like Dr. Horacek's advice about a healthy lifestyle, these global initiatives protect us with an ounce of prevention, while saving the lives of millions.

Thanks to living in a democracy, we can call or write our representatives and thank them for America's investment in these initiatives, and ask them to fund these and other health initiatives that create a better world and protect us here at home.

**Willie Dickerson**  
Snohomish, Wash.

### Get real

I see more and more of these "I stand with Chuck Thomsen" signs referring to something called "Working Families." I know no working families who support this idea. So, I write to ask others how "standing with Chuck" is working out for you.

Do you earn a living wage, now reckoned at more than \$30 an hour, twice what both political parties argue about for an unliving minimum wage of \$15 per hour? When coronavirus fears put you on leave from work, will that be an adequate paid leave? Do you have affordable healthcare? Affordable insurance premiums? Can you afford to live in your house? How is your union doing? Sen. Thomsen's Republican Party opposes such issues that could make life affordable.

"Working Families," I suspect from long experience, is what is called "astroturf," an expression referring to corporate-contrived fake "grass-roots" activist groups.

I do not support the Democratic Party, which has recently shown too much foolishness and cowardice to effectively challenge the status quo. Nor do I support their "cap-and-trade" solution to climate catastrophe, which Republicans claim caused them to leave their jobs in protest.

If you "stand with Chuck" you are supporting elected officials who act like children who don't get their way and pick up their toys and go home. This is a pathetic excuse for public policy in a representative democracy.

"Working Families" isn't real. Get real.

**David Hupp**  
Hood River

### Left field

If people can honestly "stand with Chuck Thomsen," they are clearly standing out in left field.

They are standing for dereliction of duty. All legislators take an oath of office, under which they "solemnly swear that (they) will support ... the Constitution of the State of Oregon, and that (they) will faithfully discharge the duties of Senator (or Representative as the case may be) according to the best of (their) Ability...."

The legislators who walked out of the recent legislative session clearly had the ability to walk out, which I would infer to mean that they also had the ability to stay put. And do their job.

The failure to remain suggests that these individuals really don't want to serve. Chuck Thomsen barely retained his seat in the last election. By walking out, he failed to serve the large number of Dist. 26 residents who voted for his opponent. He doesn't just represent those who voted for him.

Does he intend to give back a proportionate share of his more than \$31,000 annual salary and per diem to cover the theft of funds for his non-service? By walking out, Thomsen left more than climate change on the table.

If he didn't like climate change legislation, Thomsen could have voted no. The walkout was undertaken as a protest over the legislative majority's choice not to refer the climate change bill to the voters. If opponents still had issues with it, they could have gathered the roughly 75,000

signatures needed to put the matter before all state voters.

Clearly, it was easier to go stand in left field. We can do better. Let's replace Thomsen with someone who wants to do the job.

**Stuart Watson**  
Hood River

### Call to resign

Chuck Thomsen and the rest of the Oregon state Republican Senate and House members who are hiding out to avoid doing their jobs during the current State legislative session should resign immediately. If they are not going to do the jobs that they promised to do when they ran for election, then they must step aside and make room for someone else who will do the job they all took an oath to do. Nowhere in their oath does it excuse any legislator to be absent just because they don't like a bill that is being voted on. No government can continue to function if every time a bill comes up that one party doesn't like they walkout and hide in another state to prevent that bill from being voted on.

I know what I did to any employee who repeatedly failed to show up for work at any of the businesses I owned and/or managed during my 30 years of being a business owner and manager, fired them! And they sure didn't get paid for failing to show up like Chuck and the rest of his Republican no shows are.

**Darrell Roberts**  
Parkdale

### 'Just curious'

I drive around town a lot and have seen quite a few "I stand with Chuck Thomsen" signs. I would love to know what adults mature enough to own property are standing for: Are you proud that Chuck is unwilling to honor his sworn duty to serve as our paid representative? Is it his unwillingness to honor the state's legal democratic process and follow our laws? Perhaps you like the way he deals with things he disagrees with by "stomping out of the room?"

If you do not agree with a particular bill or the way you are being represented, then say so. Please respect the rest of the community by being honest instead of acting so proud over such immature, unethical behavior.

**Steve Kaplan**  
Hood River

### Unacceptable

I can't help but laugh when I see yard signs saying, "Thanks for Representing us Senator Thomsen" when what he is actually doing — for the second year in a row — is hiding out and not representing anybody! Have we really reached a point in our state where elected representatives don't feel obligated to show up for work? Where they don't feel a duty to make a coherent case for their policy proposals, and engage in reasonable debate with those on the other side of the aisle when they disagree? It is unacceptable to simply run away and hide, effectively shutting down the democratic process for any and all important legislation. This kind of scorched earth approach to disagreement does not serve us, the voters. It reminds me of a child who covers his ears and

chants "la la la la" to make sure he doesn't hear what he doesn't want to hear. This kind of behavior is immature, undemocratic, and unacceptable. I will gladly sign a petition for Senator Thomsen's recall so we can elect somebody who will actually show up and do their darn job!

**Peyton Helm**  
Hood River

### Recall Thomsen

When any of us is faced with difficult work, what do we do? We know that Sen. Thomsen chooses to not go to work — and somehow that does not impact whether or not he gets paid.

As I have thought about his decision to walk-out AGAIN, I have thought about a day many years ago. I was teaching at an urban high school in California, and one day our students walked out. The next several days were very difficult for all the staff, students and parents. In the following days and week, we made several changes, learning the reasons behind the walk-out, developing safer and more productive ways for students' voices to be heard, and communicating the consequences students would face if they chose to walk-out again.

What did Sen. Thomsen learn as a result of his decision to walk-out last year? Signs around the county praise him for his work — really? Apparently these people enjoy paying taxes! Also, we will all need to pay more taxes because of the many bills that were blocked by the walk-out, including the need to continue to pay for the Search and Rescue work that is state-mandated work of the Sheriff Department although the state does not pay for it. This could have changed, but Sen. Thomsen chose to not show up to pass the bill.

Shame on us for letting Sen. Thomsen think what he did was acceptable — that it does not matter whether people show up to do the work they have agreed to do because they will be paid anyway. Are there other working people who get paid even if they do not show up?

Since Sen. Thomsen has demonstrated, once again, that he does not want to do the work he was elected to do and to keep the promises he made to voters prior to the election, it is time to recall him and find someone who takes responsibilities seriously — to show up and do the work! There is so much that needs to be done!

**Ruth Tsu**  
Hood River

### Vote Democrat

When Elizabeth Warren withdrew from the Democratic presidential race, Donald Trump's comment was, "Her trouble was lack of talent. She is a mean person."

Well, I would say that's a case of the pot calling the kettle black. What a mean thing for a president to say about a highly-respected fellow politician! With those comments he has sunk below his already frighteningly low personal standards.

While I would not have voted for Sen. Warren in the upcoming primary, I have the greatest respect for her, her ideas, and her character. She has been a valuable senator for a number of years.

Trump has dishonored and shamed America and Americans consistently for more than three years. Whoever gets chosen to run against him in November, I will vote for him or her and help to elect a more intelligent and civilized president.

**Wendy Best**  
Parkdale

### 'Blessings in disguise'

In the 1950s, my since-departed mother wrote a short poem with a good message. With the hope that others find this poem to be uplifting and helpful, I ask you please publish it, in honor of Margaret Ann Fifer:

**Early Bee**

An early bee with angry buzz  
Is all upset, you see, because  
Although it isn't April yet  
An early shower got her wet  
Don't be angry, little bee,  
The rain is also good, you see.

It makes the flowers open wide

So you can get right down inside

To get the nectar, precious food

To take home to your hungry brood.

So you can say and know it's true

That nature isn't good to you?

Sometimes rainclouds in the skies

Are but blessings in disguise.

**Michael Fifer**  
Hood River

### Support Helfrich

I am really excited that Jeff Helfrich has decided to run for State Representative in House District 52. I think he did a great job last time he was in that position. Jeff is a family man, he cares about the people, and how he can serve them best. He stands for working families, and ensures we have a voice in Salem! Because of his background as a policeman, he is a great negotiator, and is used to working with people from all walks of life. He is levelheaded, hard-working, dedicated, and really cares about District 52. I hope you will join me and show your support for Jeff Helfrich State Representative House District 52!

**Michon Mainwaring**  
Hood River

### Climate crisis

Donald Rose's Letter to the Editor ("No Crisis") in the March 4, 2020, Hood River News asserts emphatically "that there is no (climate) crisis and no action is needed to reduce carbon dioxide since man-caused carbon dioxide... has negligible influence on climate" and any "Time, energy, resources, money and freedoms would be wasted on this false premise."

What does Mr. Rose mean by "freedoms?" Freedom to irresponsibly do whatever you want regardless of the impact on others or the commonweal? What about freedom from human suffering?

The increasing frequency and extremes of recurring climate disasters, such as the recent Kentucky tornado, remind us that there is a climate crisis. Peer-reviewed science

finds man-made CO2 the highly likely cause. The real and dangerous "false premise" is to assume that man-made CO2 is not the cause and not take action. Has Mr. Rose factored into his accounting what we are already spending globally NOW in "time, energy, resources, money" reacting and responding to wildfires, power shutdowns, floods, tornados, hurricanes, rising sea levels, melting glaciers, droughts, spreading diseases, etc.?

We should be putting all our "Time, energy, resources, money" into mitigation of climate change NOW to have any chance of ensuring the habitability of the planet in the future. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." "A stitch in time saves nine." Hopefully, we are still at a point on the curve where these aphorisms hold true.

**Hugh McMahan**  
Hood River

### Pandemic

To state that he has a "hunch" that the death rate of the COVID-19 pandemic will decrease is simply the first step in a double-clutch gas-light on the part of Mr. Trump. Epidemics are identified by the severe cases. With time we identify many more mild cases that dilute the critical ones. Epidemics with novel viruses generally continue until about 80 percent of the population becomes immune. At that point the cases become scattered, as the number of non-immune people becomes so thinned, there aren't many remaining potential victims ("herd immunity"). Immunity happens with acute infection or vaccination.

There are currently no anti-viral drugs for COVID-19. We are in a race with time to develop a vaccine against COVID-19 and the viral spread is outpacing the vaccine development. Most of us will survive without the vaccine and will simply "catch a cold" and become immune. But the death rate amongst the frail, elderly, seriously immunocompromised and those with chronic lung disease has been and will continue to be very high. Twenty million deaths in a world of 1.9 billion people occurred in the 1918 influenza pandemic. If this 1 percent mortality rate in the world population repeats itself with COVID-19, then 100 million will die, double the current all-causes death rate. Your frail grandmother, your father with COPD, your asthmatic sister, all would likely prefer a vaccination rather than the high mortality rate of COVID-19 in their population subgroup.

The widely publicized recommendations of our public health authorities, such as great hand hygiene, cough/sneeze control, surface (fomites) disinfection and staying home when sick are the best measures to slow the progression of the pandemic so that grandma can be vaccinated rather than suffering and dying from COVID-19. If you're thinking of doing these things to save your own hide, go ahead, more power to you. But most of us will not become very ill from this virus. The higher calling is to do everything we can to slow the pandemic in order to spare our at-risk friends and loved-ones from suffering and death.

**John Jacobson**  
Hood River