

OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat,
kick in the pants

A kick in the pants to those spreading misinformation regarding the potential pandemic from COVID-19.

There is an old adage that the first casualty of war is the truth, and that seems to hold true when it comes to what some are saying about the virus. There is plenty of downright inaccurate information floating around about the malady, and readers should remember to be very judicious regarding what they accept as the truth. From President Trump on down, lots of wide-sweeping proclamations are washing across the collective consciousness of the nation about the new virus. The best place to find out the truth is to go online to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the World Health Organization and read the information that is readily available.

It's not just misinformation that's been spreading like wildfire. Director of Umatilla County Health Department Joe Fiumara said this week that

the health department has been hearing reports of prejudice against people of Asian decent and against members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation based on unfounded fears they may be more likely to have the virus. He reminded people that COVID-19 does not target people of any certain race, ethnicity or country of origin, and people should not make assumptions about someone's health status based on those factors.

"Viruses don't care where you live, who you are or where you come from," he said. "They're equal opportunity."

Uncertainty and fear can drive panic. That's why it is important to be shrewd about what you believe and read regarding this new world crisis.

The right information is out there.

A kick in the pants to the lack of participation by residents in a number of local political races. A good case in point is the fact there is only one contested race on the Pendleton City Council as the May primary



AP Photo/Evan Vucci

Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar listens as President Donald Trump talks to reporters during a signing of a spending bill to combat the coronavirus at the White House on Friday.

approaches. There is no denying local political participation as a candidate can be difficult and time consuming. Yet, our democracy is built on the foundation of voter participation. More people need to step up, especially from an area as rich with local talent at Umatilla County.

A tip of the hat to Gov. Kate Brown for including \$6 million in her last budget for suicide prevention. In 2018, 129 Oregonians aged 24 and under committed suicide, which turned out to be the leading factor in youth

deaths in the state. That's not good. What is good is that Brown allocated money to help battle this disturbing statistic. But more needs to be done.

A tip of the hat to all the volunteers, school officials and state athletic personnel who make the Class 2A state tournament such a success every year. The tournament has become a fixture for Pendleton, and every year it plays host to an outstanding youth athletic event. Everyone who helps make this event such a good one should be lauded.

FROM SUNUP TO SUNDOWN

In basketball, and life, following through is as important as trying

I wasn't sure what we'd signed ourselves up for at the beginning of basketball season this year, but isn't that how we all feel at the beginning of anything new?

The group of boys all had different reasons for being there. Different personalities. Different abilities. Different, yet so much the same. Boys — wanting to be bigger, stronger, and faster than they really are. Boys — hoping for stardom and easy shots. Boys who showed up for practice every day, but didn't always have a clear picture of how much effort and persistence it would really take to make the shot, get the rebound, and make the plays that count, day after day after day.

As I watched from the sidelines, over the course of those three long months, I couldn't help but make my own mental notes about their performances. I watched their body language on and off the court, I cringed at their mistakes, and I applauded the shots they took that went in, and even those that didn't. And throughout the whole season, I kept coming back to the same verse from the Bible over and over again.

Luke 9:23 (MSG): "Then he told them what they could expect for themselves: 'Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat — I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you?'"

The varsity team Mason started for as a freshman had a record of 0-25. They didn't win a single game. And even though they showed up to every practice, and every competition, it never was quite enough. The only advice I have for them as they prepare for next year, and the years after that, are from these silly little notes written in my journal that really aren't so silly at all:

Keep your head up

Looking down is easy. It doesn't require much thought, it doesn't challenge you, and you only see a limited piece of where you are and not one extra inch of the people and places beyond yourself. Keep your head up and allow your eyes to lead the way. Allowing your eyes to guide your feet pushes you to that place where greatness can happen, not because of how many shots you made or even how many you missed, but because you were willing to

see the big picture and not just yourself.

When it's hard, don't run away

Finding the easy way out is what a lot of people do these days. The tendency is to run the other way and try to figure things out all on your own, refusing to stick with a plan for a variety of reasons, but mostly because you're afraid to fail. None of us want to look foolish, and I don't think any of you wanted to let anyone down — especially your coaches. Hard builds character. Hard pushes us to places

we've never been before. Hard has the potential to turn us into selfless people — where selfishness can't even think about growing. Facing hard head on — that's where you find out what you're made of and who you're really trusting to get you through.

Remember to jump and follow through

You are not going to make every shot you take. Sometimes you forget to jump, sometimes you forget to follow through, and sometimes, you're just plain off. The important piece is that you remember why you're here in the first place. Not just to win, not just to hear the crowd cheer, and not just to make the buzzer-beater in overtime — although that would be nice. You're here with your head up and your eyes wide — listening and learning — even when you're on the bench, to become a better person, a better player, and a better teammate. If your success doesn't require persistence, practice, getting along with your teammates, jumping in when it's easier to jump out, and following through, not just with your words, but with your actions — game in and game out — you're not really learning anything.

Even though the season is over, I continue to reflect on that verse in Luke and what basketball season did for all of us. It may have been grueling and hard to keep going day after day, but I'm so very thankful for the habits we all gained during those months — keeping our heads up, running toward life (not away from it), jumping in when we were needed most, and following through to the best of our ability. Those habits that were formed are crucial not only for playing basketball, but they are also critical for success in life.

Habits are hard, but they do make life easy. Keep shooting boys — and don't forget to jump and follow through with all you've got. You were born for this!

Lindsay Murdock lives and teaches in Echo.

CDC GUIDELINES ON SAFELY ENJOYING THE OREGON WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM'S RUN IN THE PAC-12 TOURNAMENT...

DO:

- Remain calm (despite historic season)
- Sanitize T.V. remote regularly
- Turn head 90° clockwise during chest bumps

DON'T:

- High Five
- Hoard the snacks
- Share over-sized Foam Fingers



YOUR VIEWS

McLeod-Skinner powered by the people

The people-powered candidate: The Oregon Secretary of State serves all of Oregon's 36 counties as chief auditor, administrator, and elections officer. Jamie McLeod-Skinner is the only candidate for secretary who has visited and connected with communities in all of our 36 counties. She wouldn't need to play catch-up in getting to know Oregon.

During her 2018 run for Congress, the "Tear Drop Trailer" candidate put over 40,000 miles on her Jeep, crisscrossing our district. She would stop to visit with farmers working their fields and would drop in on local board meetings to hear rural concerns in one-on-one conversations. Jamie is the only candidate for secretary who doesn't live in the Portland-metro area, and will bring a rural perspective that is currently missing at

the highest levels of state leadership.

Jamie is the only candidate who has pledged not to take corporate PAC, pharmaceutical or fossil fuel money. Jamie is accountable only to the voters and is truly the people-powered candidate.

Jamie understands that Oregonians have more in common than what divides us. She has the skills and experience to make voices heard from communities across the state. She can be a bridge builder between all of Oregon's demographic groups and political parties. Jamie will help ease our state's urban-rural divide, empower the voices of our working families, strengthen our communities, and protect our environment.

Please join Lonnie and me in voting for Jamie McLeod-Skinner as Secretary of State, our people-powered candidate. We trust her.

Vickie Read
Pendleton

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