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## OUR VIEW

# Looking forward, moving ahead

The past year was a difficult one on many levels — mostly because of the coronavirus pandemic — but as 2022 beckons, we will grasp an opportunity to build on the already obvious successes of the region.

For some, success may be hard to discern, especially with the cloud of COVID-19 lingering, but the region has much to be proud of.

The clearest indicator of triumph is the low jobless rate across all Eastern Oregon. Everyone, it seems, who can work is. That bodes well for our region's economy — now and into the future.

New Year's resolutions are part of the popular culture arena we all live in but there is nothing wrong with setting specific goals for the next 12 months. One goal should be to focus on what is working and vow to fix what isn't.

One of our regional strengths is a determination to overcome challenges. The bedrock of our culture is a pioneer resolve to scratch out success wherever it can be found. We also can rely on a rich legacy passed on from Native American culture, an almost sacred birthright, that existed long before the first wagon train emerged from the Blue Mountains.

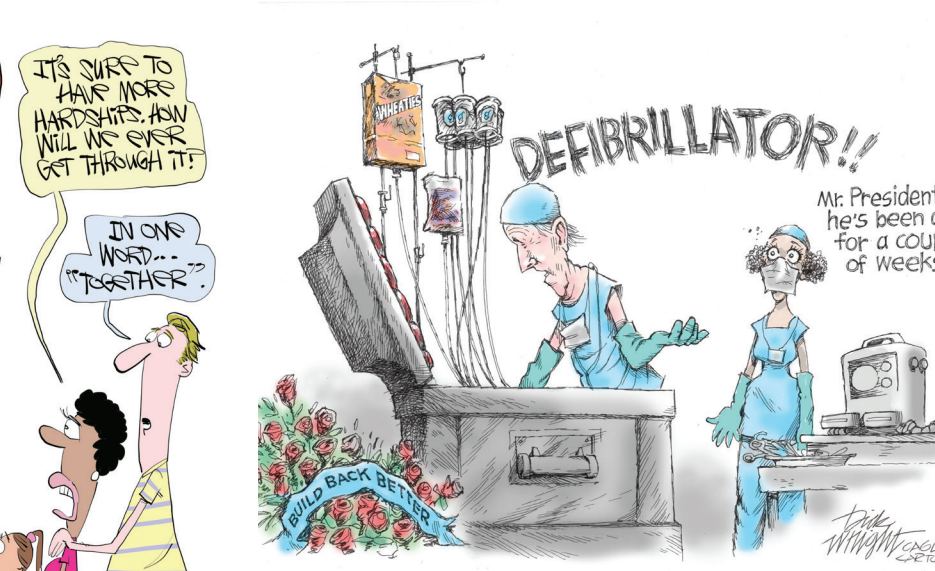
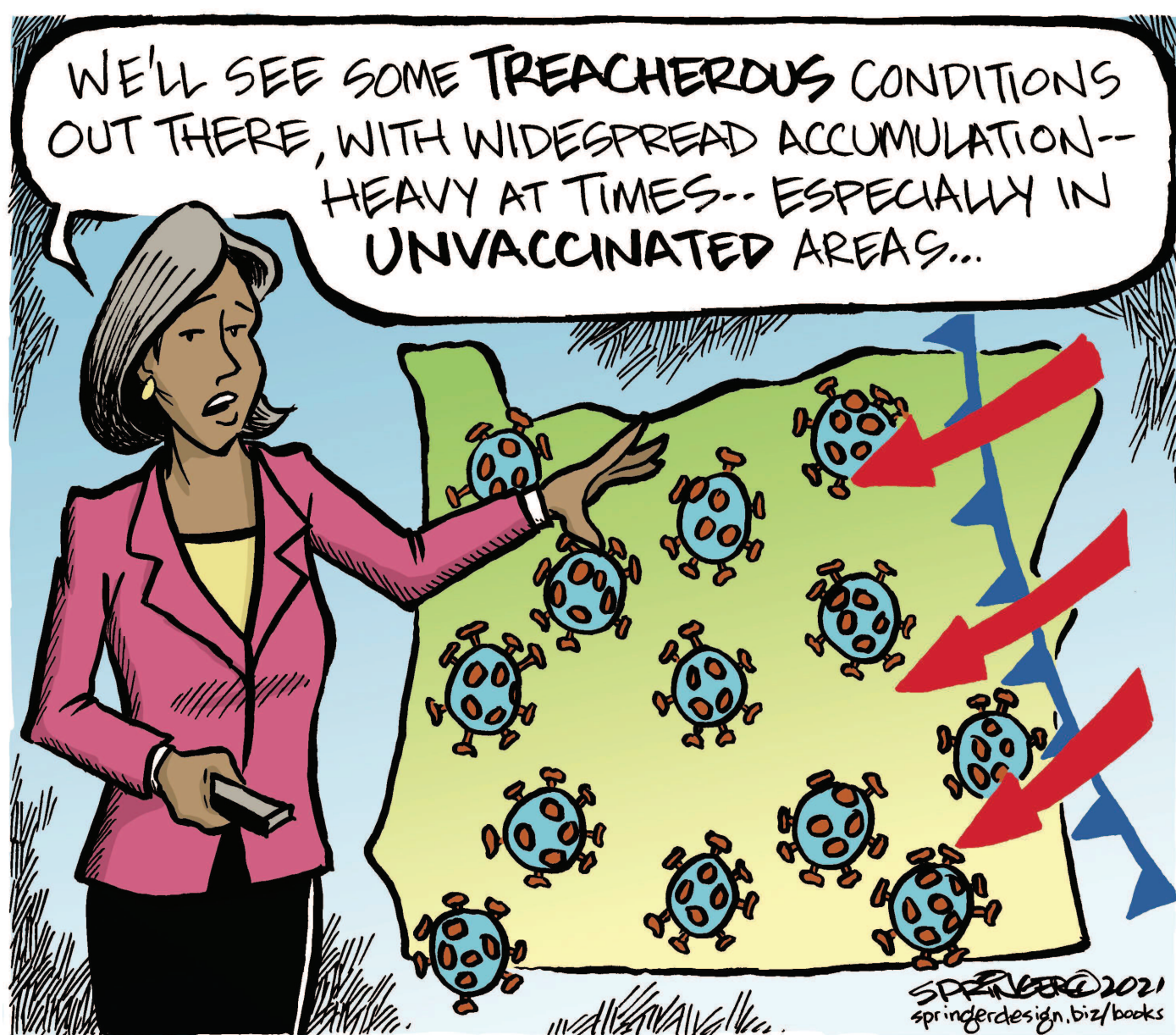
In short, we are a diverse group and that means we carry a deep reservoir of strength, a tradition of surmounting problems. Our inheritance was bestowed by our Native American and pioneer ancestors, and it is more than a historical relic to admire. The residue of our determination can be found in the small towns that dot Eastern Oregon.

We must translate that determination and dedication to success in the next year. The COVID-19 pandemic isn't going to go away but there are lessons to be learned from the past year that can be used in 2022. One of the biggest lessons is we, as a regional community, can overcome just about any challenge if we address it quickly and with courage.

While it is difficult to predict the future, we can chart a course that rests on unity and a determination to adapt and overcome obstacles.

The new year brings opportunity for all of us. We should not fail to clutch those opportunities and to resolve to face our challenges with courage and grace.

Happy New Year from the East Oregonian.



## YOUR VIEWS

### Tip your gas station attendant, please

I have always thought that tipping, in many ways, is a curious thing. Who we tip and why we tip has always seemed very inconsistent and arbitrary.

If we go to a restaurant and the server provides good service, it is the norm to give that person a 15-20% tip. The logic has been that they don't get paid a lot per hour, so tips supplement their income and it gives us the opportunity to acknowledge their good service. Seems reasonable.

If you go to a coffee shop or a bar, if the person provides some friendly small talk along with your beverage, it's pretty common to give that person a dollar or two.

You might tip the person that cuts your hair, maintains your yard or delivers your newspaper, especially during the holiday season.

Why not the person that pumps your gas? Many people pull up, barely open the window to slide a debit card out, while sitting on heated seats, comfortably out of the elements. The gas attendant is on their feet all day, standing in freezing weather, maybe with the wind blowing, with little thanks or acknowledgment. Rarely a tip. In the summer they stand out in sweltering heat but the results are typically the same. How did we leave them out of customary tipping? In Oregon we have the luxury of staying in our vehicles while someone fuels our vehicles. I think it's time we acknowledge what they do, especially in a time when it's difficult to find employees.

I am sure there are many other types of jobs I could use as an example, but it's time to recognize others for the work they do. I would encourage all of you to tip when someone does a job you value, especially workers that are paid at the lower end of the pay scale. Some employers don't allow tipping, but I think the employee working hard would appreciate the fact that you tried to recog-

nize their hard work. Just a thought. Have a happy and prosperous 2022.

Scott Erwin  
Redmond

### Rudeness is a weak imitation of strength

Sometimes someone thinks something is funny but it is down right rude. For instance: If you take the chewing gum out of your mouth and stick it behind your ear before a meal, pick your teeth blatantly with a straw in public or talk with your mouth full.

George Washington said, "Every action done in company, ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present."

Manners refers to behavior in social interaction — the way we handle the encounter between yourself and others. We have good manners when we use our hands well, when we handle others with care. Depending on our will and sensitivity, you can strike or lift up, hurt or soothe, destroy or heal. We understand the importance for children to be taught and adults whatever political party to demonstrate the having of good manners. Something is not a joke when used to emphasize that a situation is serious and that someone means what they say. Even a joke that didn't get a laugh still leaves you better off if it's seen as appropriate. Bullies always say they didn't mean it, it was only a joke.

Remember Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas spoke to eighth graders after his inappropriate work jokes almost lost him a Supreme Court position: "Good manners will open doors that even the best education will not and cannot. Even though you might have strong feelings about a matter ... that does not give you a license to have bad manners."

Please use this opportunity as we return in our schools to focus on good manners. "Choosing Civility" by P. M. Forni is a great book choice for all schools that teaches how we ought to treat each other. And what could be more important than that?

Rudeness is the weak person's imitation of strength. Let's make our schools strong in good manners. Don't curse the darkness. Let's light a candle of kindness together.

Sally Sundin  
Walla Walla

### Green energy or greenbacks?

I found the article concerning test drilling for Lithium in Oregon very interesting ("Test drilling OK'd for proposed lithium mine," Dec. 23 edition). Especially given the number of green new deal proposals before Congress. It made me wonder if all these proposals were designed to protect the earth or were there alternative motivating factors.

The Biden administration signed an executive order to strengthen the domestic lithium supply. Oregon Department of Geology and Minerals granted Australian-based company Jindalee Resources a permit to dig 39 test holes. The executive director of Jindalee estimated there could be more than 10 million tons of lithium. At \$15,000 a ton that works out to around \$150 billion from just one mine.

In light of what happened in the Ukraine concerning family members of politicians enriching themselves, I would like to know what politicians own stock in companies dealing in lithium. It appears to be a huge conflict of interest to vote for electric vehicles or renewable energy storage facilities if you own stock in the production and mining of lithium.

Since domestic production of lithium in the United States makes up only 1% of the world supply of lithium, this mine could be a cash cow for the investor. It just seems the push for green energy may be motivated by a push for greenbacks. I think all politicians should declare if they own any lithium stock in advance of any vote concerning green energy proposals. Just my thoughts.

Joe Mesteth  
Hermiston

#### EDITORIALS

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

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