

OPINION

VOICE of the CHIEFTAIN

Across the aisle in the Capitol

Policy disagreements, partisanship and the walkouts can give Oregonians a distorted picture of what their Oregon Legislature is like. Journalists — and certainly this editorial page — tend to highlight conflicts, not the places of accord.

Recently, however, what state Rep. Daniel Bonham said during a committee hearing struck us regarding a resolution to honor former state Rep. Mitch Greenlick.

Bonham is a Republican from The Dalles. His district includes a large part of Central Oregon — Sisters, Culver, Madras and the Warm Springs Reservation. Plot Bonham and Greenlick along an ideological line and there would be a big gap between them in how to solve many of Oregon's challenges. Bonham would be on the right. Greenlick, a Democrat who represented Multnomah and Washington counties beginning in 2002, was on the left. Greenlick died while serving in office on May 15, 2020.

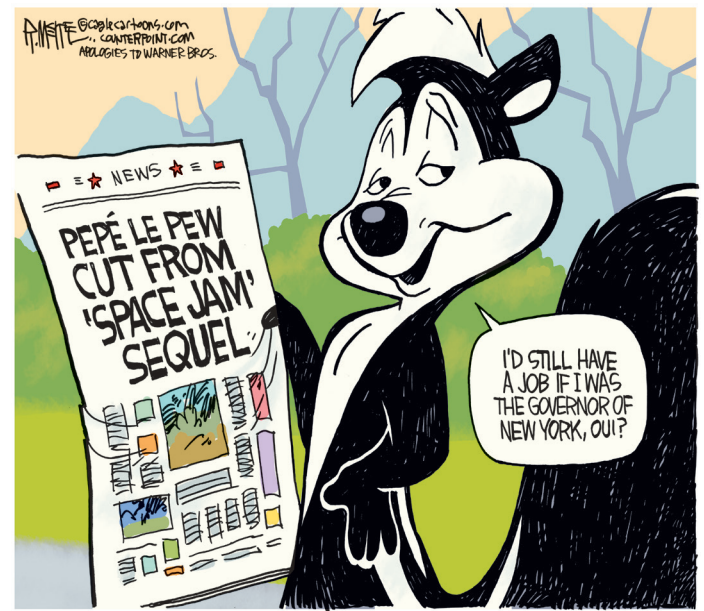
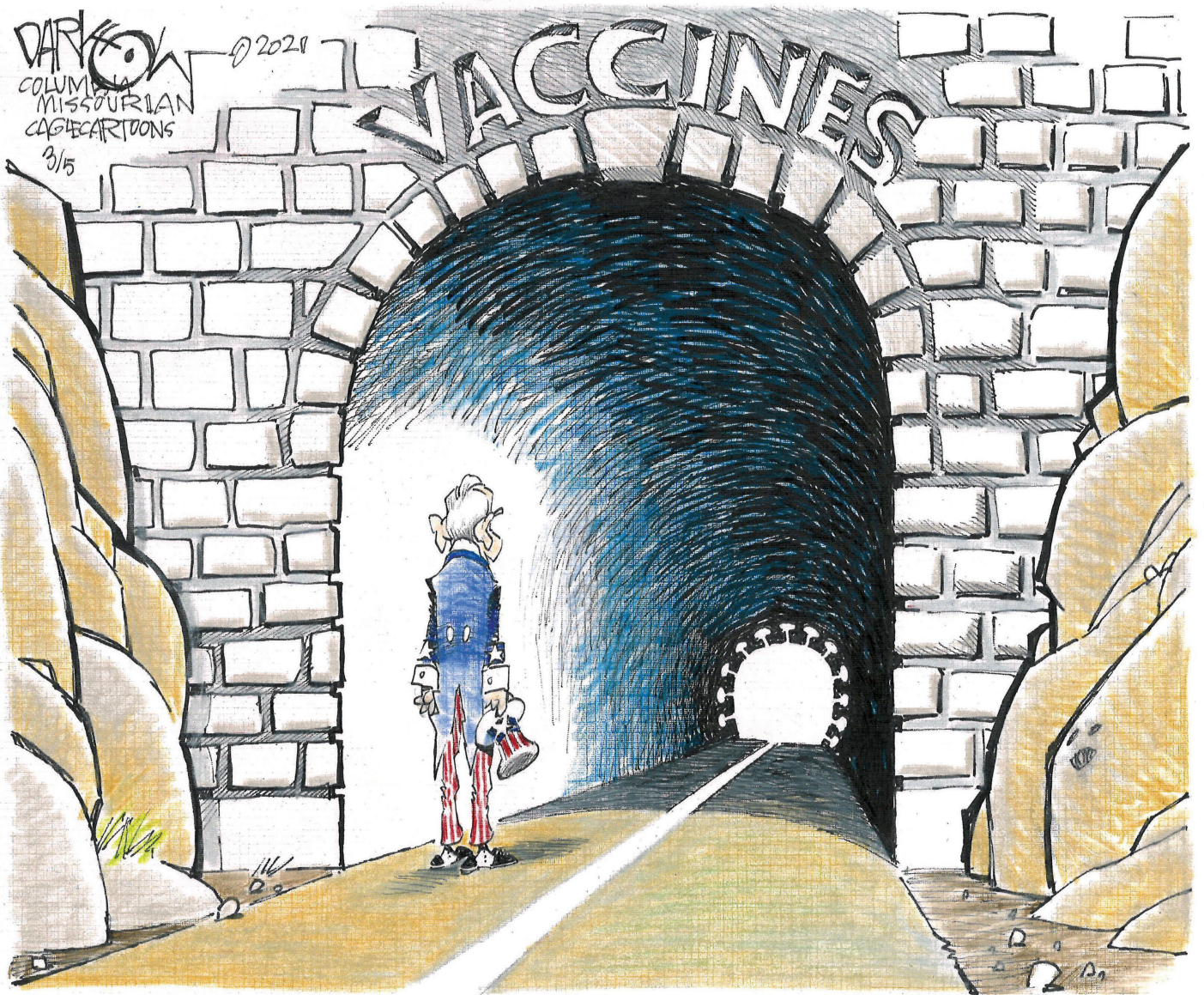
They became friends. Commissioners of several Central Oregon counties appointed Bonham to the Legislature in November 2017 to fill a vacancy. He came into the session in 2018 trying to find his way in the new role.

He happened to stay in the same hotel for the session as Greenlick and his wife, Harriet. They fell into the habit of exercising together in the gym and joining each other in the pool. And talking.

"I got to know Rep. Greenlick more on a personal level than anything else," Bonham said. "What really impressed me was just his care and concern for helping somebody brand new to this role that truly was trying to find their way. And despite the fact that we were not of the same party affiliation or shared the same views on how to solve health care problems, we had many wonderful conversations.

"I will say we probably talked more about the kids, the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren than we did about public policy. But his care and his compassion for others was just evident in his approach to life. And we saw it come through in very passionate ways both on the floor and in committee and even over lunch.

"I wanted to take the moment to stop by your meeting here today and to offer my words of just gratitude to the Greenlicks. Again, I don't know how you talk about Mitch without talking about Harriet. I don't know how, at least from my experience. They were such a team. I am grateful for their friendship and for the kindness that they showed me. I give my absolute support to SCR (Senate Concurrent Resolution) 3 and encourage everyone else to take a moment and read through it and remember and honor our good friend Mitch Greenlick."



LETTER to the EDITOR

Vaccine ethical issues are concerning

The ethical issues raised by the ongoing coronavirus vaccine campaign are concerning. We would surely consider it outrageous to expect young people to participate in an organ-harvesting campaign (knowing young, healthy people do not need two kidneys or a full-sized liver) in order to benefit the older and sicker among us, yet we expect our young people to take a non-FDA approved biologic

in pursuit of that objective. Research hasn't even yet concluded that the vaccine will prevent coronavirus transmission, just that it seems to prevent severe symptoms (remember that, in unvaccinated people, up to 80% of cases are asymptomatic or show mild symptoms). A healthy young adult has a greater risk of dying in a car accident on the way to be vaccinated (14 deaths/100,000 people) than he or she does from actually contracting coronavirus (seven deaths/100,000). The Hippocratic Oath reminds medi-

cal providers to "do no harm," yet there are planned experimental studies on newborns (who are unable to consent) that will certainly be used to encourage immunizing children against a virus that causes negligible symptoms for that age group. These are complicated issues and, as the old proverb goes: "The devil takes a hand in what is done in haste." We need to take a slow, careful look at the medical ethics around the vaccine campaign.

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