

VOICE of the CHIEFTAIN

## Regaining the spirit we had on Sept. 11

Saturday marked the 20th anniversary of the horrific terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

For many of us, the images from that morning are seared in our minds, something that will never be lost.

For the current generation of high school students — even some college students — and younger, it is history they didn't live through, a history they will only get from what we tell them about it.

But whether you lived through it or view it only as history, it should carry a weight of impact with it.

That impact, though, may be fading.

What did you feel after 9/11? How did you respond to those around you?

People often talk about the togetherness, the sense of unity and the love of our nation that was felt in the aftermath of 9/11.

It shouldn't have taken a terrorist attack to bring those things to the surface, though. And yet those very principals, it seems, are fading just as fast as the memory of 9/11.

We say, "Never forget." Have we forgotten?

We should care for those around us. Do we?

We should have respect for and love our neighbors, even if we disagree with them or have different viewpoints. Do we?

There are pockets of this love, respect and care, to be sure, but it seems more and more that is being replaced with vitriol. Many feel that if their neighbor is only 99% in agreement with them, then they are 100% against them, and thus, an enemy. There are countless topics to be divided on, as well, and there is virtually no way for each person to be in exact agreement with another.

So does that mean we should all be enemies?

Of course, the answer is no. But we often act that way.

And if that course of action doesn't change, we may as well be lost as a nation.

That is no way to remember those lost on 9/11.

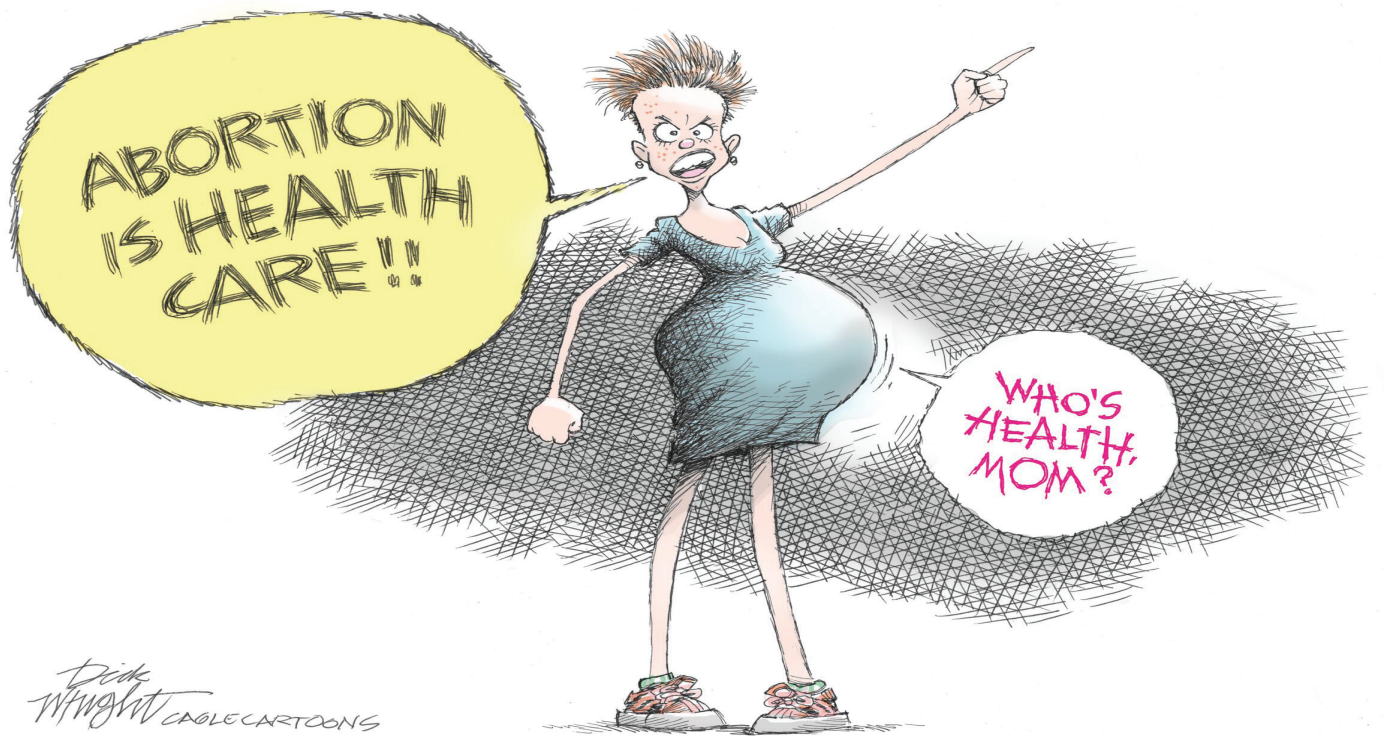
You can disagree with someone — even vehemently — on a topic, and yet still be good friends with them. Care about them. Love them. A great example of this is the friendship between two late Supreme Court justices, Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who were often on opposite sides when it came to a vote, but were close friends in spite of that.

That is the spirit we once had as a nation, and that we seemingly have lost.

If you disagree with someone, don't badger them into agreeing with you, then turn and call them a bigot if they choose not to. Choose to respect their position and opinion, even if you disagree with it. Choose to be there for them. Choose to love them — which is to look out for their best interest.

This is just a small piece of spirit of America that we had after 9/11, one that has been lost.

One way to honor the memory of those lost is to regain that spirit.



Dink Wright CABLE CARTOONS

### LETTERS to the EDITOR

#### Times like this require conformity 'for greater good'

America is facing a public-health crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The federal government and scientists working together developed successful vaccines within an unprecedented timeframe — an astounding achievement. Scientists and epidemiologists are learning more about the virus as time goes on and make adjustments accordingly. Unlike other (better?) times, citizens are not united in confronting this crisis. By not getting vaccinated and refusing to wear masks and social distancing, individuals help propagate the virus and encourage more dangerous mutations to develop.

Many of these same people immunize their children from other childhood diseases as well as vaccinate their pets and livestock. Why not vaccinate against this particular virus? The answer appears to be from an onslaught of disinformation and a misguided concept of government authoritarianism and loss of liberty from following public safety measures.

No, the government is not using health care to develop an authoritarian state, but simply trying to protect its citizens from death and disability — one of its primary functions. This is in contrast to the violent Jan. 6 insurrection, which actually did threaten our democracy, as did consequent attempts to undermine the presidential election results and subvert voting rights in some states. The cry of "authoritarianism" is obviously by someone who has never lived or visited a true authoritarian state and rings hollow. Following health guidelines is a temporary inconvenience, not a loss of freedom. There are times when conformity is needed for the greater good. This is one of those times.

Jon Larson  
Enterprise

#### Journalists are perpetuating fear-based narratives

It is an unfortunate observation that data and logic have become largely irrelevant due to the politicization of the pandemic. As I was perusing the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics, I was struck by the principle: "Seek Truth and Report It: Journalists should provide context (and) take special care to not misrepresent or oversimplify... a story." Bearing this in mind, it occurred to me that most of the coverage of the pandemic by the mainstream media has been unethical at best, and at worst, insidiously contemptible.

I recently read the headline: "COVID-19 infections and deaths spiral out of control in Oregon," (WSWS.org, Aug. 31, 2021). Perhaps this journalist is unaware that the deaths in Oregon resulting from the Delta wave are not even half the number of deaths we saw at the peak of the pandemic in early January this year (538 deaths from Dec. 6, 2020 to Jan. 9, 2021, vs. 218 deaths from July 25, 2021 to Aug. 21, 2021) and that these numbers, combined with the most recent OHA report showing that "new cases in Oregon are continuing to decline," do not lead anyone with average reading comprehension skills

to conclude that deaths are "spiraling out of control."

Another shocking case of blatant misinformation was observed on MSN.com. The headline, "Podcaster Joe Rogan Is 'Treating' His COVID-19 With Horse-Dewormer and Other Drugs," fails to mention the fact that this "horse dewormer" is actually the Nobel Prize-winning drug ivermectin, which has been used safely in humans for over 35 years with more than four billion doses administered to date. Furthermore, a peer-reviewed study out of India that showed the prophylactic use of ivermectin "was associated with a 73% reduction of SARS-CoV-2 infection among healthcare workers for the following month."

Calling ivermectin a "horse dewormer" is disingenuous, to say the least. The media is manipulating public perception through the use of negativity bias, selection bias, attention bias, the framing effect and egocentric bias. Anyone following the science can see that COVID-19, with its 98.2% overall survival rate (99.8%+ for people under 49) is being used by the mainstream media to whip people up into a frenzy and generate revenue from "click-bait." It behooves us to do our own research before we publicly expose our own fear and ignorance.

Rebecca Patton  
Enterprise

#### Government overreach must be stopped now

On the morning of Wednesday, Sept. 1, I attended a rally at the Wallowa County Courthouse for "Stop the Mandates." It was extremely well-attended for being on a work/school day. People of all ages were represented, and all came together with a common goal. The goal was to end the vaccination and mask mandates in the state of Oregon.

I was approached, through social media, to represent people who could not attend and in less than 24 hours garnered over 150 signatures. These signatures were from teachers and school staff, nurses, health care professionals, frontline workers, military personnel and retirees, many of whom will lose their jobs and positions if vaccine mandates are enforced.

Are enforced mandates worth losing hospital staff, school staff and firefighters? Furthermore, it has been threatened that if they lose their jobs due to a choice of freedom they will not receive unemployment benefits, yet people who quit their jobs early on in the pandemic, simply due to virus fear, were not only rewarded with unemployment benefits, but extra money every week.

Many of these folks have worked through the pandemic, some of these folks will lose their jobs, some of these folks are even vaccinated, but all of these folks believe in freedom of choice. My question for those who support a foreign substance being injected into an unwilling participant is, what is next? What will be mandated next?

I am not an anti-vaxxer, nor am I against people who choose to receive a COVID vaccine or to wear a mask. The "science" states that the vaccinated can still get, spread and carry the virus, so it

seems a moot subject for getting a job that has only been tested for a few months. This, of course, is my opinion. I support the right to choose, the right for freedom. Government overreach will affect everyone eventually if not stopped now. I choose freedom.

Judy Kinsley  
Joseph

#### Vaccine mandate no different than traffic laws

I was out bicycling yesterday, and Labor Day traffic was so unremitting that I could not cross Main Street in Joseph. I resorted to walking my bike in the crosswalk, and fortunately a few drivers slowed down enough to let me cross alive.

I don't know about you, but I am thankful that Oregon's laws require drivers to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks. I'm thankful that legions of anti-crosswalk citizens aren't flaunting this law and running over old ladies, moms with strollers and people like me. Probably their slogans would say something about "refusing to kowtow to the authoritarian regime" for limiting their constitutionally protected driving rights. They would possibly claim that, if their basic freedom to drive is violated, "we will see this overreach of power extend much further," "tormenting us for our own good" and, God forbid, even limiting our "inalienable rights" to cross yellow lines, drive on sidewalks and disobey stop signs.

Mandates for vaccination and masking are no different than traffic-safety laws, which, let's face it, limit some personal freedoms for the safety of the "collective." The right to infect is not enshrined in the Declaration of Independence.

Rob Kemp  
Joseph

#### River Democracy Act a good thing to support

I just wanted to briefly point out how great it is that Sen. Wyden spearheaded the move to expand the wild and scenic rivers in Oregon. Overall, the state has around 1% of its rivers and streams designated as such, and with this new push it should end up closer to 6%. Still, this pales in comparison to the 17% of all U.S. river miles that are impacted by our 75,000 or so dams.

At a time when there is a new weekly reminder of climate derangement, it is a step in the right direction to safeguard these habitats. Every little piece is worth protecting. Carbon accounting only gets us so far, and I fear that without intact ecosystems everywhere, we'll continue to face adverse effects with weather.

In this plan it's refreshing to see that clean, cold water and fire planning are put in the forefront. What's more, tribal voices will have a place in the conversation about how to manage these waterways and riparian areas. Overall, it seems to be a safe compromise that leaves private property and irrigation rights fully protected. I hope similar legislation is given consideration here and elsewhere into the future.

Garik Asplund  
Enterprise

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