

VOICE of the CHIEFTAIN

OSAA is closer to getting it right

The Oregon School Activities Association is closer to getting it right.

The OSAA Football Ad Hoc Committee last week dropped its support of adding nine-man football to the mix for 2A and 1A schools in Oregon.

The problem wasn't so much the potential addition of nine-man football, but that the proposal would do away with 11-man football for 2A schools and eight-man football at the 1A ranks. Instead, there were going to be two divisions of nine-man football.

Schools didn't like that, and it appears the committee listened. According to a report in The Oregonian, there was 95% support of keeping eight-man football in the fray among surveyed 1A athletic directors.

It may seem insignificant to add one more player to the field (or, for the bigger small schools, to remove two players) but for many small schools in the state, including in Eastern Oregon, eight-man is a way of life. For a lot of these schools, it is all they know, and it is where their heritage lies.

That the committee was quick to listen to the coaches who wanted to maintain an eight-man rank shows that voices matter, that speaking up can have an impact.

While we want to give the ad hoc committee kudos for listening, there is one more considered alteration that needs to be dropped for the entity to gain our full applause.

And that is the concept being looked at of making schools who play down a classification ineligible for the postseason.

Many schools who play down do so because of a lack of success at the classification they should be slated for, and part of that is due to a lack of players on their teams. Player safety is also a consideration.

Enterprise has been a prime example of this. It's no secret the Outlaws have struggled on the gridiron for several years now, especially when they are playing 11-man football. The last few years, they have dropped down to the eight-man ranks, and that is serving the purpose of getting the program built back to where it needs to be. And as a result, the team is having more success. Getting wins goes a long way to getting players out the next season — and the year after. It helps younger athletes who aren't ready to mix it up with their older, stronger teammates get trained up so they can handle the next level.

Punishing schools for trying to do this — which is what the postseason ineligibility would do — defeats the purpose, and takes away from the reality that high school athletics should be about the kids.

It should be a no-brainer for the Ad Hoc Committee: drop the ineligibility clause from consideration.

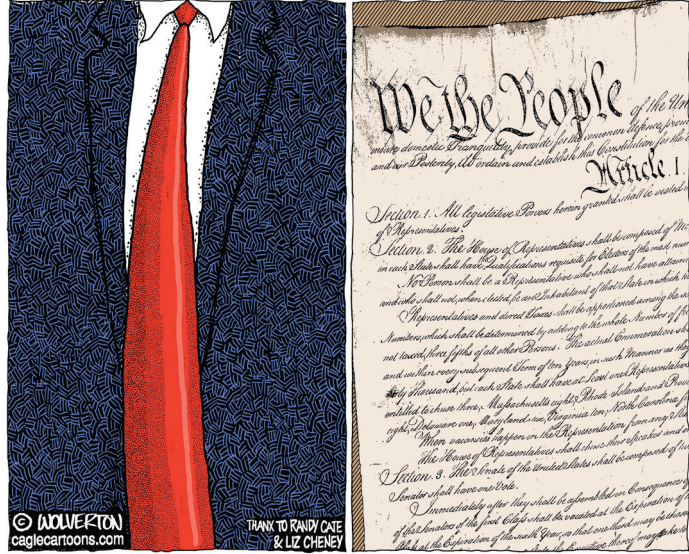
Then the group will, indeed, be getting it right.

Alternative to airline cancellations ...

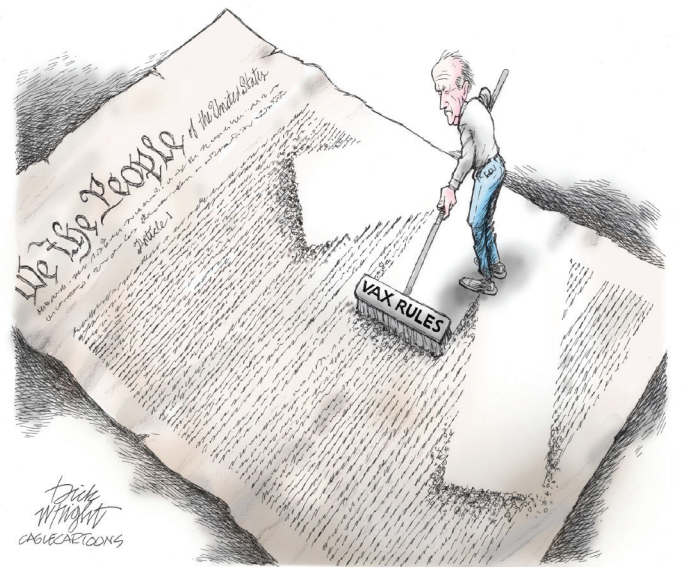


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REPUBLICANS MUST CHOOSE



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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Would vaccinate again in a heartbeat

I read with interest about the fever reported by the editor on Page 5 of the Dec. 29 Chieftain in reaction to his second vaccine dose. A Google search for "FDA 144637" finds a document showing adverse reactions to the Moderna vaccine. The table on page 17 for those aged 18-64 shows that 12 subjects out of 10,985 had a fever of 104F or greater, only one case required hospitalization.

Meanwhile, the death toll due to COVID in the U.S. is at 836,000, with millions having permanent disabilities. The vaccine tricks our immune system into mounting a defense against COVID, a fever is the natural result. The new omicron variant is somewhat milder than delta, but still dangerous and far more contagious. Oregon hospitals are already under severe strain, and omicron won't peak till the end of January. The Washington DOH reports that those unvaccinated between ages 35-64 are 14 times more likely than the vaccinated to require hospitalization for COVID (Google "doh. wa 421-010").

We must all come to our own conclusions about where to go for information and how to calculate the odds for the best outcome. To me the numbers indicate that it is clearly in the best interests of myself and of my community (especially for overworked hospital staff and those with other medical issues) to be

vaccinated. I, too, was laid flat for a couple days after the second dose, but would vaccinate again in a heartbeat.

**Jerry Gaffke
Flora**

Checklist for Democrat standards

In reference to the Checklist for Republican Standards submitted by Stephen Ducat (Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2022), I offer the following:

The midterm elections are only 11 months away. Many of us in Wallowa County might have some uncertainty about which of the upcoming 2022 candidates are really worthy of the Democrat brand.

Given the high standards set by President Biden, Nancy Pelosi, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez and Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, not every would-be politician could measure up.

To aid in that determination, I've put together this convenient checklist. Our aspiring representatives should:

- Rail against CNN-fueled culture war phantoms like White Supremacy Theory, but never define what the "fair share" is that the super rich should be paying.
- Believe the right to restrict another's freedom without due process is a fundamental duty.
- Argue against science-based public

health guidelines.

- Promote medical treatments that have no evidentiary support.
- Fight for the interests of transgender people in sports and support Title IX.
- Pretend that the BLM rioters who have caused billions of dollars in property damage are "peaceful protesters."
- Assert that in spite of losing the Electoral College, Hillary's loss to Trump was stolen with the help of the Russians.
- Insist that requiring identification to vote is contrary to maintaining integrity in our voting system.
- View foreign dictators like China's Xi Jinping and Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro as role models for American leadership.
- Believe in open-border policy while at the same time supporting higher wages for low-skilled workers.
- Teach our children that if they're white, they're oppressors and that if they're black, they're oppressed.
- Believe that Black Lives Matter unless they're in the womb.

Feel free to use this handy checklist to see which local Democrat candidates might deserve our vote. Sweeping generalizations are incredibly helpful to the public dialogue, so I wanted to play my part in keeping the Chieftain balanced for those of us voting D.

**Jim Rice
Enterprise**

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infringe on the rights of private citizens. Letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published.

SEND LETTERS TO: editor@wallowa.com, or via mail to Wallowa County Chieftain, 209 NW 1st St. Enterprise, OR 97828