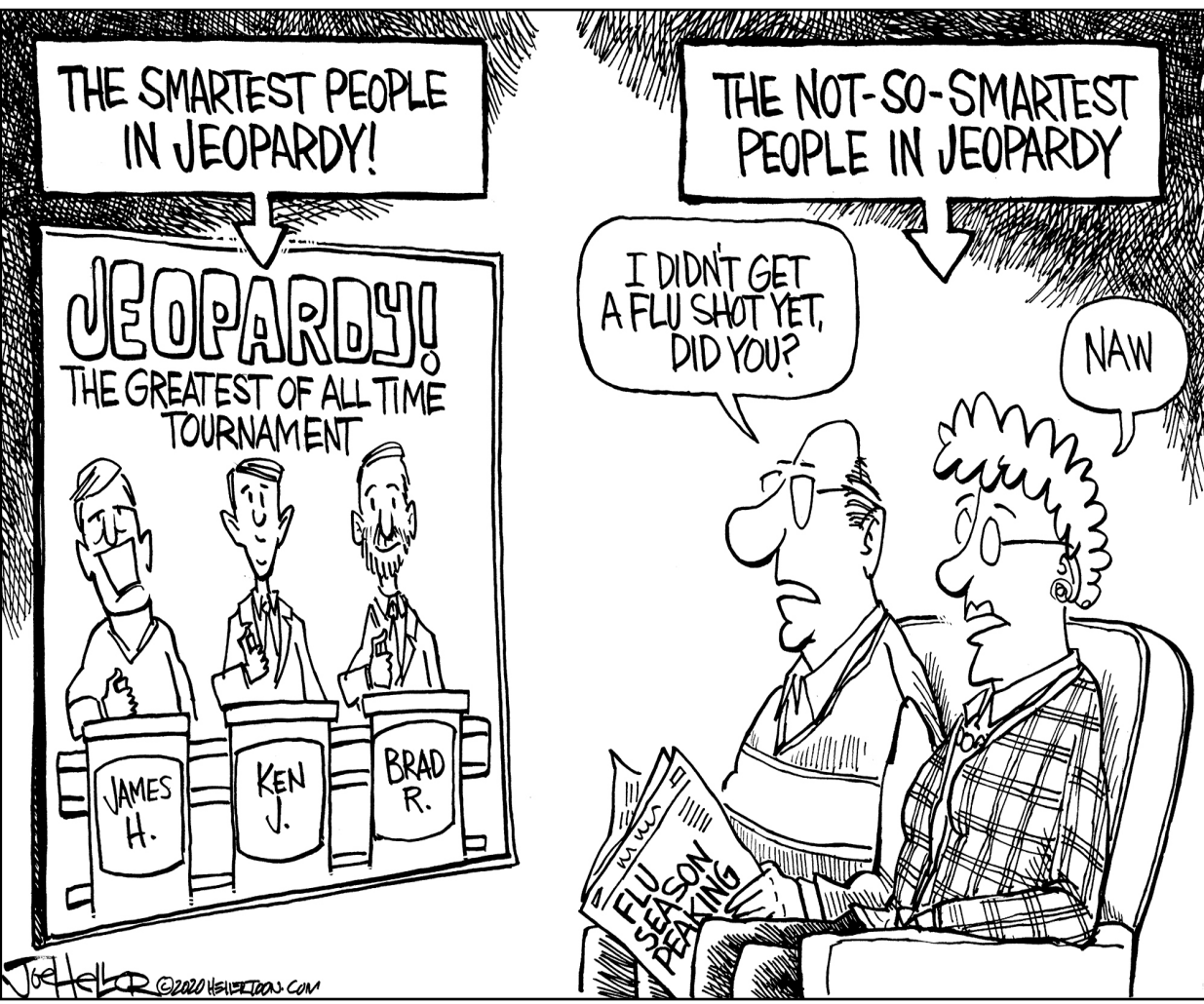


Siuslaw News
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Opinion

The First Amendment
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



Woman's suffrage was always built in when times changed

(Editor's Note: Viewpoint submissions on this and other topics are always welcome as part of our goal to encourage community discussion and exchange of perspectives.)

It is axiomatic in the discussion of woman's and mens "right" to vote that we consider some of the history of voting in America. Ned Hickson's editorial "Women's Voices Crucial To Defining Our Democracy" (Jan. 11) on women's voices' as they relate to suffrage misses the mark somewhat. The Framers of the Constitution in 1787 were thinking big on the culture that was ever present and the future progressivity of America. Only property owners could vote, which was an excellent philosophy as it turns out, wanting informed voters participation to protect a Republican form of government — not an Athenian pure democracy where everyone votes, is cumbersome, unworkable and with few checks and balances. That pure democracy was responsible for Socrates assassina-

tion. Our Framers and Founders were forward thinkers, unselfishly circumspect of the populace always and limiting the power of an overreaching Feder-

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Joel Marks Florence

al government. Ned Hickson's editorial was far too simplistic emphasizing gender politics, which was far from the Creators' intent for this nation's brilliant documents. The purpose of America was to be for, of and by the people as their creation of a Constitutional Republic ultimately accomplished. Therefore, because they allowed and embellished states' rights first and foremost and then allowed the Federal amendment process, woman's suffrage was always built in when times changed. I hope Ned Hickson did not believe that in 1787 everything would be perfectly progressive as his article tends towards in 2020.

No. Five states, including Wyoming and Washington's male legislatures, had already given women plebiscite opportunity. Methinks Mr. Hickson is taking quite a bit for granted, because the states were already tending for female suffrage without the Federal government's intrusion. You might say the amendment process in the 1919 acceptance of women's "right to vote" impeded states' rights and strengthened the federal government again — which in hindsight has become Frankenstein in the 21st century. Yes, women needed the right to vote. But today we have many uninformed voters due to many progressive ideas in the early 20th century which has ultimately damaged the Founders' original formula of limited government. We should not be so quick to espouse feel-good politically correct nostrums which, in retrospect, have helped destroy that delicate balance of separation of powers, including the states. God bless America both in 2020 and 1919.



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