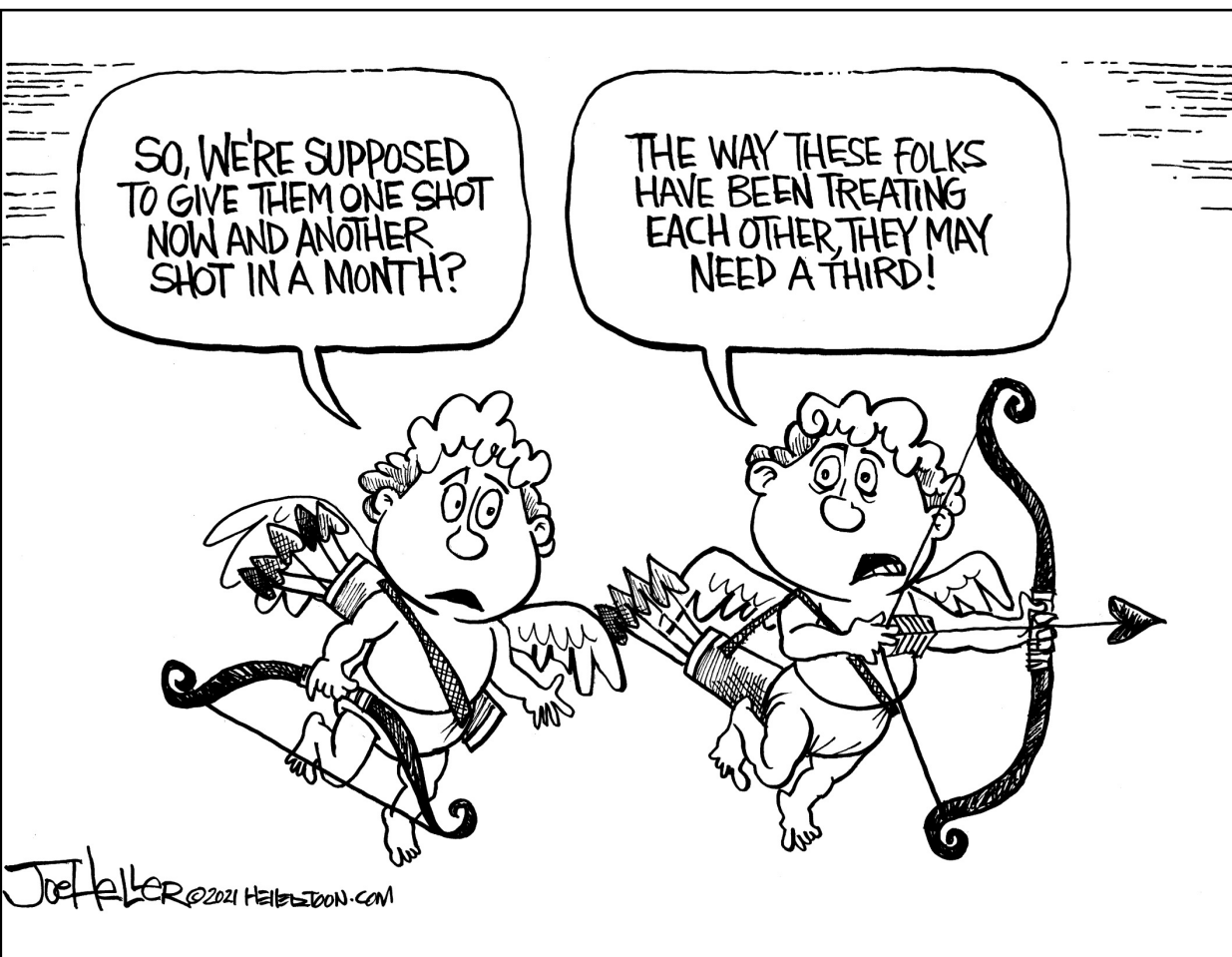


Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

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)



Making 2021 more than another 'Groundhog Day'

(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.)

The movie "Groundhog Day" starring Bill Murray was released Feb. 12, 1993. The tragi-comedy had Murray playing the cynical TV weather "talent," Phil Conners, covering the annual Groundhog Day hoopla in Punxsutawney, Pa. For reasons unknown, his character becomes trapped in a time loop, forcing him to relive Feb. 2 repeatedly and — spoiler alert — it ends happily when Phil sheds his cynicism, abandons all attempts to escape the loop and learns how to "get it right."

Groundhog Day garnered good box office traffic and decent reviews at the time. In the 28 years since, the movie has grown in popularity and has taken on a semi-cult status as an allegorical story, cultural touchpoint and subject of analysis by writers from various religious disciplines.

In America, the phrase "Groundhog Day" has become analogous with a monotonous, repetitive, annoying and an unwanted situation. Yeah, kind of like a pandemic. The unprecedented 2020 year has

passed... but the Groundhog Day aspects linger on into 2021, making it feel as if we are treading a hamster wheel with "Phil Conners," but with no definitive ending in sight.

GUEST VIEWPOINT By Rachel Pearson Florence

Groundhog Day is seemingly frivolous and ridiculous, with archetypal characters and the quintessentially hokey American holiday of seeking weather forecasts from a marmot — and yet, the story is meaningful because it asks the question: "What would you do if you could repeat one day until you could 'Get it Right?'"

With that thought, a section of the article by Anne Tergeson "How Covid-19 Will Change Aging and Retirement" (*Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 15, 2020) is worth considering. It includes pertinent questions for those of us missing the "before times" routine and who are seeking new ways to work, worship, communicate, celebrate and, yes — thrive.

She writes:
"George Kinder, founder of the Kinder Institute of Life Planning, says that [during the pandemic] his

clients '...are re-evaluating what's important in their lives. The break from routine has freed up time to assess plans, values, and the kind of legacies people want to leave.'

To prompt clients to clarify their goals, Mr. Kinder asks three questions:

1. What would you do if you had all the time and money in the world?
2. How would you live if you knew you had only five to 10 years left?
3. What would you most regret if you died tomorrow?

'Covid essentially poses the same questions,' says Mr. Kinder.

I hope everyone will consider answering those three questions and maybe even post them in a conspicuous spot and refer to them on a daily basis.

Maybe jot them in a journal and ignore them, then check back one year from now and decide either "Yes... that made sense!" Or, "I'm going to do things differently in 2022."

In case you missed it, the 2021 Punxsutawney Phil Groundhog Day went virtual. And — you guessed it: He predicted six more weeks of winter.

Whichever options you choose, have a safe, happy and productive "get it right" 2021.

LETTERS

NO NEED TO FEEL THREATENED BY HOMELESS
I have never thought of homeless people as being a threat to the community of Florence.

In my volunteering in Florence, I have met many homeless folks over the years and have heard some of their stories. Instead of feeling threatened by the homeless, I hope Mr. Jarvis will think about the homeless in new ways perhaps.

Perhaps he could listen to some of these folks and learn a bit more about their circumstances and then feel less threatened.

He might also realize that what some need — especially during COVID — are not readily available. This includes jobs, affordable housing and so much more.

—Jan Hirsch
Florence

PROPOSED COMMUNITY REC CENTER IS EXCITING
It was exciting to read about the plans for the old football field to possibly be developed into a fun hub of recreation, entertainment, food and socializing for Florence. ("New Community Multi-Purpose Center Planned for Region," Feb. 6)

This is something that will enhance our community for all ages and it will be exciting to see it develop, especially as we emerge from the isolation of Covid.

I can't help but love that they are going to keep the old football field name and call it the Hans Peterson Recreation Center and that this center will also sustain the aquatic center in Mapleton.

It seems like a win/win.

This is the kind of fun, healthy, family-friendly place a lot of us have talked about for a long time and it looks like it is going to happen. I looked at the website (SiuslawRegion.org) and it gives a lot of good details.

There is also a place under "Contact Us" where you can give you thoughts about what you think the center should include. It says, "What do you imagine? Let us know."

Exciting!

—Jennifer Waggoner
Florence

AMERICA IS 'BACK' BUT NOT IN A GOOD WAY
Joe Biden, when he isn't busy writing another of his many Executive Orders, keeps on saying, "America is back."

For the first time in his 40 some years at the public trough, I have to admit he keeps saying something I can completely agree with!

He, along with Patrick Leahy with 46 years, Chuck Schumer with 40 years, Nancy Pelosi with 34 years, Bernie Sanders with 30 years, Maxine Waters with 30 years and Dianne Feinstein with 28 years — for a total of 208 years in Congress — are bringing America back:

Back to borderless national boundary lines...

Back to invasion of illegal persons with possible viruses...

Back to a frontal assault on peaceful law-abiding gun owners with the new House bill...

Back to higher taxes if they push paying for student loans and reparations to Blacks...

And these are just some of the items being "brought back."

I could list a lot more of the things they want to — and will — bring back.

America was a lot better off before Biden's Socialistic regime came to power.

God help and God Bless America.

—Tony Cavarro
Florence

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside the Siuslaw News readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) Explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

Email letters to:
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WHERE TO WRITE

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