

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 their Government for a redress of grievances.

Letters to the Editor Policy

The *Sentinel* 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anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The *Sentinel* 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.

Send letters to:

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DAMIEN SHERWOOD/COTTAGE GROVE SENTINEL



Cold weather revealed many warm hearts

out. Do you all need anything?"

While the snow continued falling silently throughout the region and piling on more challenges with every inch, neighbors were reaching out to neighbors and lending a hand, a warm meal, clothes and in many cases shelter.

ouage challenges), some folks like 21-year-old Remington Moore were out on their day off offering help to those stranded on the roadside after being caught off guard that first day.

And those acts of Good Samaritanship are continuing. As Donald Burton called me Monday to tell me how a group

the group moved snow, mud and uprooted trees to provide access.

Meanwhile, in our own way, *The Sentinel* news team — though operating remotely from different locations — was doing what it could to keep the community informed of road, school, hospital and government closures, as well as where to get help, report emergencies and offer support.

In the weeks ahead, our outlying neighbors in Dorena, Elkton, Yoncalla and other small communities will continue to need our help and support.

When we look back at the March 2019 Snowstorm of the Century, I think we can be proud of the example so many in our community set, and the legacy of neighbor helping neighbor that our children will carry with them from it.

From the Managing Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

And it wasn't just neighbors. First responders, local organizations and volunteers mobilized despite the conditions to make sure those most in-need were checked on and cared for wherever possible.

As we wrote about in our last edition (a rare Friday publication due to our own power

of 20 or so members of Christian Aid Ministries (Oregon Unit #7) met at the Koffee Kup at 9 a.m. with a list of folks needing help — including his friend Scarlet Polgar, who was essentially trapped in her home located way up Abbott Lane north of Cottage Grove. Using Bobcats and strong backs,

The following Facebook exchange on What's Going On In Cottage Grove exemplifies the general consensus with the community during last week's "Snowmageddon."

Debra Cooper Riordan:

"Veronica I think we're neighbors, my husband Jim and I moved into the white corner house with the big trees in front..."

Veronica Lind:

"Debra Cooper Riordan, Hi there! We are neighbors. We live 2 doors down from you. Alisha told me your power is still

LETTERS

Thanks for the exercise

I shoveled my driveway a couple times due to continuing days of snow. Along came a city snowplow and covered the entrance to the driveway — the rest of the driveways on the street also. I will admit I was upset.

"Now why would anybody do something like that?" I asked myself.

Well, duh! It dawned on me: It was to keep people off the street, lessen traffic and, if someone needed to go shopping, they would be able to get the exercise that almost everybody needs.

I probably needed the exer-

cise. So thank you to whoever is responsible for that thoughtful action.

—Dick Gilkison
Cottage Grove

Proud of community of do-gooders

I welcome this opportunity to publicly thank all the utility and public works crews for their Herculean efforts last week. They worked tirelessly in bitterly cold and dangerous conditions to restore power and to clear our roads for us.

To reassure concerned friends and family, our first responders made countless welfare checks on those with dead cell phone batteries and no way

to communicate.

I also want to say what most of us already know... We are truly blessed to live in this caring community of thousands of do-gooders!

My husband Ralph and I were snowbound on Weeldreyer Hill all of last week. Like many, for four days we survived without power, heat or water in subfreezing temperatures.

We received dozens of calls and texts from concerned friends, relatives and neighbors. Several of them trudged through nearly 20 inches of snow to bring us food.

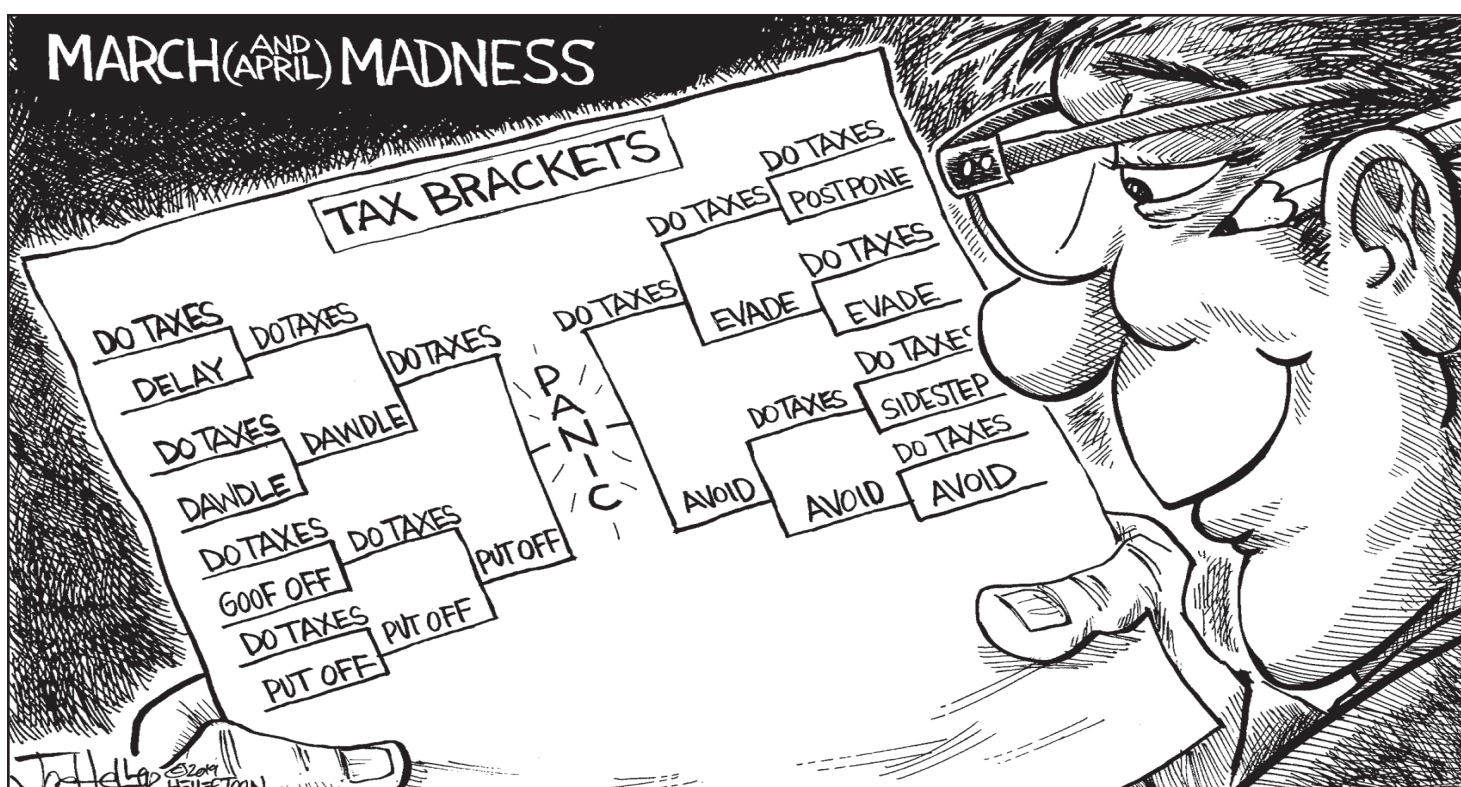
It was heartwarming to read social media posts and to check-in with friends and colleagues. Everyone had stories

of how they were helped or how they were helping others survive Snowmagedden 2019 — the worst snowstorm here since 1969.

I'm proud of how folks throughout Lane and Douglas Counties responded to this winter emergency with compassionate care for others.

For years our government leaders have encouraged us to be prepared for situations like this. Perhaps this unexpected snowstorm can serve as a dress rehearsal for "The Big One" and motivate us to be more prepared for the next emergency event.

—Cindy Weeldreyer
Cottage Grove



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