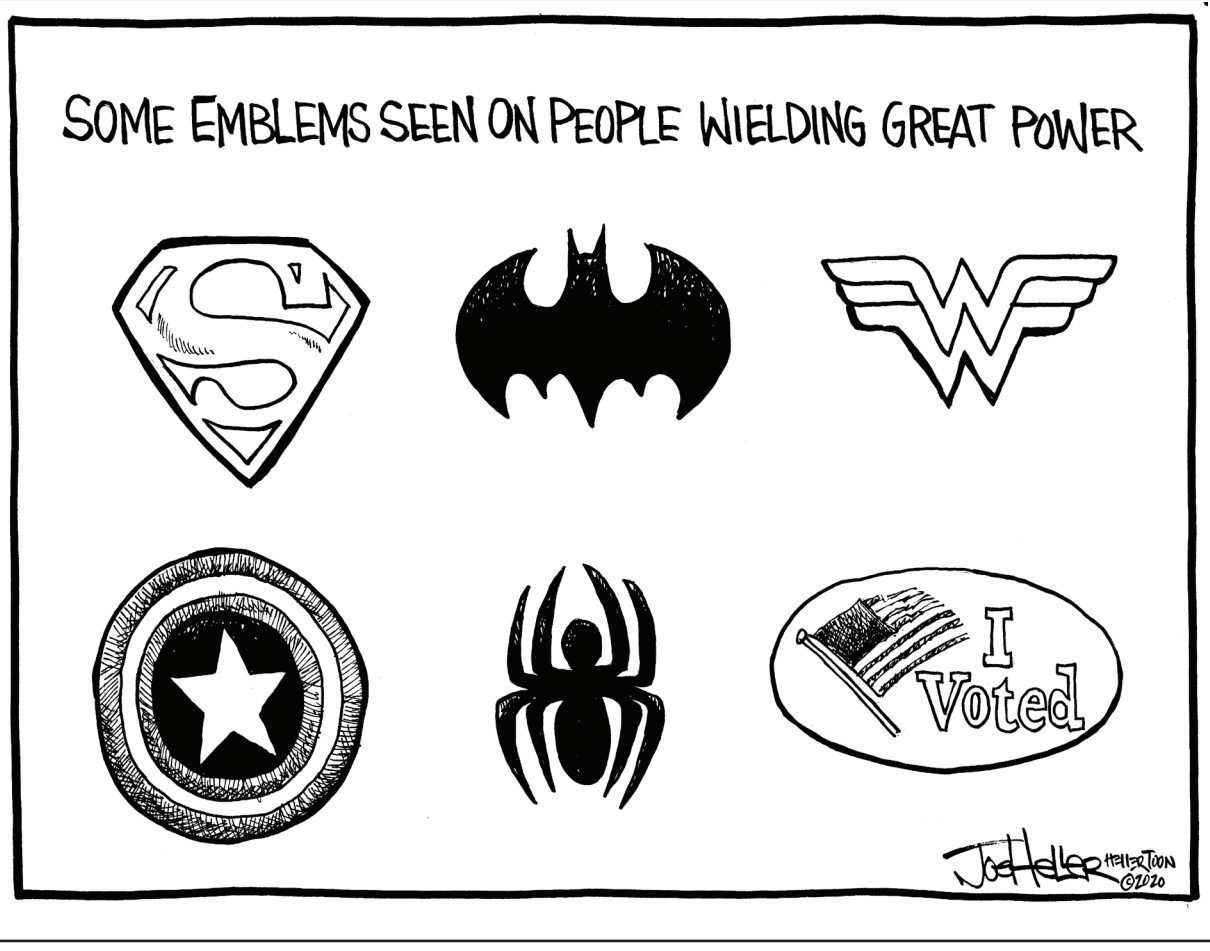


Cottage Grove Sentinel
116 N. Sixth St.
Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

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)



Let's move forward by expecting better from ourselves



reach for a blindfold when it comes to how we see each other and anyone with a differing viewpoint.

stantly being diverted away from real interaction with each other and toward a nebulous relationship with those

ness to provide some much-needed levity.

It is within times like this, especially as we enter into the holiday seasons of Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year, that we are reminded of the things that unite us as people rather than partisanship.

I realize that the end of the elections doesn't guarantee something better.

However, I believe in the natural pendulum swing we regularly take as a society in our ever-constant need and desire to correct ourselves in the pursuit of something better.

I still believe that, despite how our divisions have been amplified because, ultimately, we share more common ground than our surface tribalism would have us believe.

We can expect better as we move forward — and we *should*.

From the Editor's Desk
Ned Hickson

While I don't necessarily subscribe to the theory behind trickle-down economics, I have become a firm believer in the trickle-down effect of national discourse and its ability to permeate how we feel about our lives — and, just as importantly, in recognizing the good in each other.

The overt divisiveness that has arisen within our society over the last few years has conditioned us to accept pessimism as a natural part of our daily perspective.

Forget about wearing rose-colored glasses or beer goggles; more often than not, we have come to instinctively

It's a mindset that runs completely counter to being thankful — because it narrows our vision and minimizes the chance of recognizing any good that exists within our peripheral.

To put it plainly, it's hard to appreciate a sunset while facing east.

Admittedly, I'm no exception. And not just because I have a lousy sense of direction.

In today's constant barrage of information, opinion and analysis through news outlets, social media and notifications on phones, computers and tablets, our attention is con-

stantly being diverted away from real interaction with each other and toward a nebulous relationship with those we hardly know.

The result is a growing inability to live in "real" time and in the moment with one another. With the elections essentially over and taking into account the historic participation made by fellow Americans, I hope we can finally begin talking about the things that unite us and the common good that defines us as family, community and ultimately as Americans.

I believe the trickle-down divisiveness around us can be diluted if we allow the ripple effect of thankful-

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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 unsourced 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.

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