

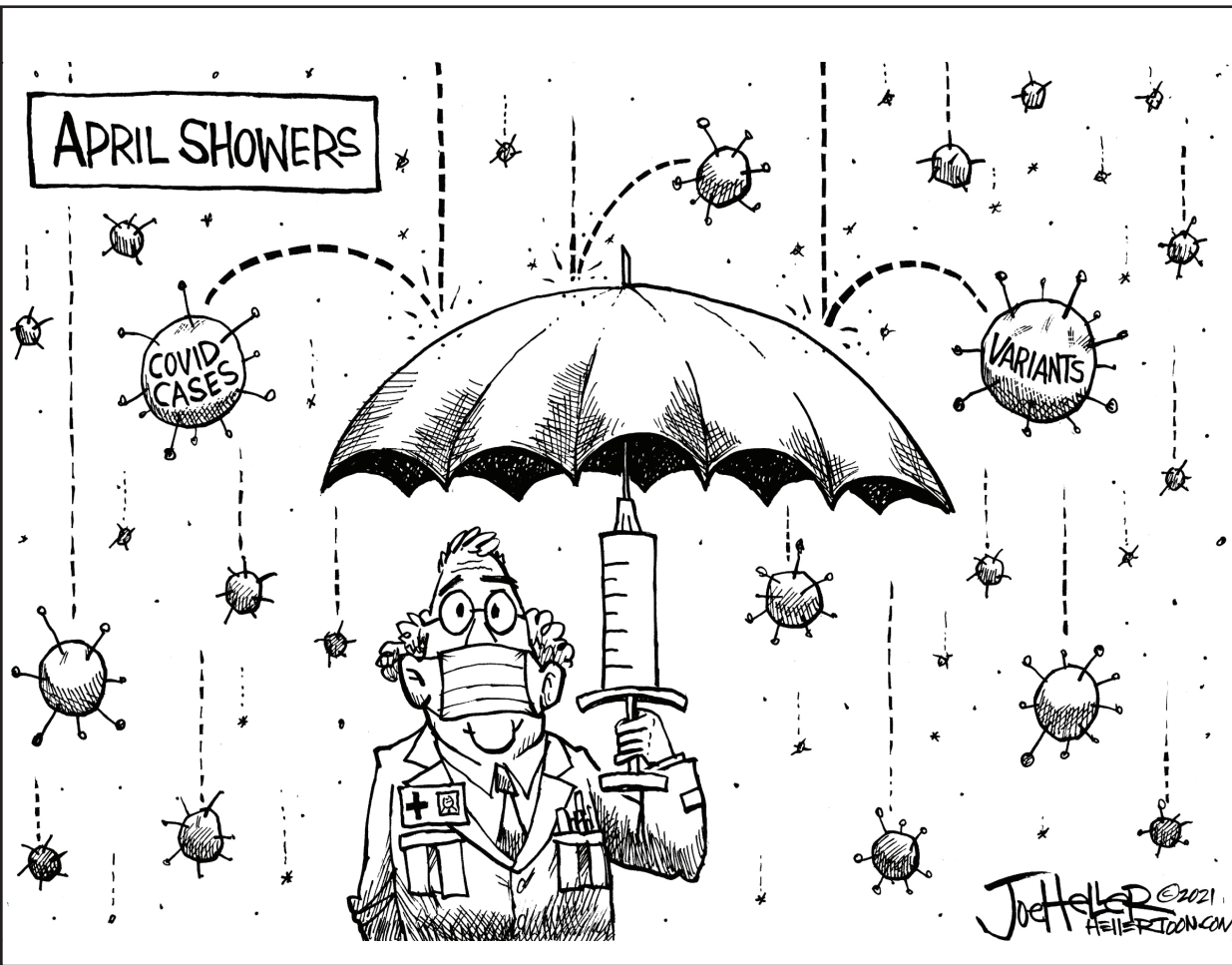
Cottage Grove Sentinel

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)



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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anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.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.

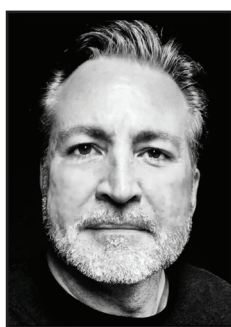
Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

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.

**Send letters to:**

nhickson@cgsentinel.com

## Let's not allow COVID to make a comeback



years covering sports, one phrase that I heard coaches repeat over and over, season to season, sport to sport was this:  
*Just because we're ahead doesn't mean we can relax.*

been in the valley, the end result is the same: We win as a county and we lose as a county. Without question, the combined factors of better weather, spring breakers and a false

that we finish strong and not allow COVID to make a comeback. If we remain resolute in our own practices of mask wearing, social distancing and hand washing, each one of us can play a role in reaching that finish line — maybe in time for July Fourth.

I can't think of a better way to celebrate our independence from a virus that has caused so much havoc than by doing so in our own backyards with family and friends on Independence Day itself.

The coming week could likely see a return to "high risk" status for Lane County. Instead of losing steam, let's use that as motivation to make a final push together to secure that Independence Day goal for each other, our schools, local businesses and our community.

**From the Editor's Desk**

Ned Hickson

The same can be said about the current battle that continues against COVID-19 in our communities and across Lane and Douglas counties. While we have made progress and edged into a small lead, it has become clear in the past two weeks that we have relaxed. The result has been a fourth-quarter rally by the virus in Lane County.

And while the rise in cases has primarily

sense of security over vaccination rates have all played a role in the attitude that we can let our guard down and coast to the finish line. But that would be a costly mistake, especially for our local businesses, which are just now beginning to feel some relief — and hope — after the financial devastation of the past year.

We owe them, and one another, the diligence needed to assure

Over the past several weeks, we've experienced the first glimpses of what a return to some level of normalcy could look like as coronavirus infection rates dropped and vaccination numbers rose.

For the first time in more than a year, our communities have been able to return to dining in, our local businesses have expanded hours and services, and limited numbers of fans were able to attend local sporting events to cheer for teams in Cottage Grove, Elkton, North Douglas and Yoncalla.

That being said, during my previous 16

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