

Cottage Grove Sentinel

1498 E. Main St., STE 104
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anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.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:

dsherwood@cgsentinel.com

LETTERS

VACCINE DISINFORMATION

This is in response to the Letter to the Editor titled "Disinformation Landscape" in the Dec. 23 edition of *The Sentinel*.

I was disappointed in Ms. Zee's idea of worthy information.

While she claims to trust science, she betrays a lack of understanding about verifiable information. For example, she draws conclusions about vaccine safety from the VAERS website even though the site itself explains that what they are presenting is raw, unconfirmed data. That would be like using police hotline tips to convict people of crime without bothering to investigate first.

The increase in death after vaccination that she noticed is likely explained by the fact that before COVID, most vaccines were being administered to children under 6. The first COVID vaccines were administered to the elderly and medically vulnerable populations first, so of course we would see more death after vaccination, but not necessarily from vaccination.

Ms. Zee then offers us odd little uncited stories. One says the CDC director made some statement about false positives, but I couldn't verify it. Another claims hospitals are killing people, "local groups" are practicing medicine, healthy young people are entering the hospital to get Remdesivir, and people are filing lawsuits. I'm not sure what any of that has to do with vaccine safety.

I totally agree with her about greed-driven businesses, however that does not mean their product is unsafe. Generally, businesses are not interested in killing their customers.

I am sympathetic to folks who have family members who reacted badly to vaccination or who have other underlying medical conditions. Still — and it is unfair, but not an atrocity — these folks need to be highly mindful of others, both for their own safety and ours. I may be completely vaccinated, but I can still get Omicron and infect you.

We have 4 percent of the

world's population and almost 20 percent of all COVID deaths. This is not the stuff of heroes. This is a time to learn, to adapt, to be patient and be strong in the face of adversity.

It's time to get vaccinated, wear a mask and socially distance. We have been through worse. We can do this.

—S.H.
Cottage Grove

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON VACCINES

There is a lot to unpack from Joanna Zee's response (in the Dec. 23 edition of *The Sentinel*) to S.H. on misinformation surrounding the COVID vaccines.

She states that after just a " cursory" look at the VAERS website she was able to determine that the "death rate and cases of severe side effects far exceed the cumulative number of all vaccines in the last 20 years."

That is an incredible conclusion to jump to from a " cursory" look. VAERS is a database that anyone can report to, that draws no conclusions about the information reported. (It also includes all vaccines not just COVID.) The CDC reviews all of the reports. Many reports are useful, but some reports are nonsense.

To prove the point, one anesthesiologist submitted a VAERS report years ago that the flu vaccine had turned him into The Incredible Hulk. Another report of a 2-year-old dying from a COVID-19 vaccine was removed from VAERS because the CDC researched the claim and concluded it was fabricated — two-year-olds are not given COVID vaccines.

I worked in biotech for 17 years. I handled viruses and human tissues. I ran bioassays and generated a lot of data. To interpret and investigate that data takes special training and I would not begin to claim that I can look at the VAERS website and come to any real conclusions about the safety of the vaccines.

The idea that children are dying from the COVID vac-

cine is patently false. This idea has been spread through social media due to something a former VP from Pfizer, Michael Yeadon, said in a June 2021 interview with Steve Bannon. The vaccines were not being given to anyone in the general public under 18 at that time and none of the children in the clinical trials died from a vaccine.

According to the CDC, there are no confirmed deaths in children from vaccines. Over 700 children have died due to the disease. Two hundred of those were under 4 years of age.

The organ failure example cited as being due to Remdesivir has been spread by a chiropractor on social media. Lung and kidney failure are also a result of severe COVID, so the relationship to Remdesivir has not been concluded by any reputable research that I could find.

Which peer reviewed scientific studies was she referring to? I'd like to see them. And why would a healthy young person enter a hospital just to be given Remdesivir? Did she mean a young healthy person with COVID?

So, in conclusion, I did not find that Ms. Zee's claims about the side effects and deaths from vaccinations were conclusive or well-researched. Her reports are fueled by rumor and fear. I suspect that S.H. wanted citations of actual original papers, research and websites, not just a vague reference to whistle blowers and undercover videos.

I do agree that insurance and pharmaceutical companies do not always have our best interests at heart and that the bottom line is what motivates them. That is often also true of lawyers, so pending lawsuits don't mean their cause is just.

Treating a hospitalized COVID patient is far more expensive than vaccination and prevention. The vast majority of physicians do recommend the COVID vaccines. Do you think that they don't have your best interests at heart?

—Patricia N
Cottage Grove

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