

Anti-vaxxers put us all at risk

Over the past few weeks, we have received reports of an outbreak of measles in southwestern Washington, which has now hit more than 50 patients.

“But I thought we eradicated measles along with polio and a host of other serious diseases through vaccination,” you might be thinking to yourself.

You’d be right about that. The U.S., for all practical purposes, had indeed eradicated these pestilences as vaccines developed by top health care pioneers like the legendary Dr. Jonas Salk virtually wiped out these dreaded afflictions.

So what has changed? In the Clark County (Vancouver), Washington, case, it has been reported that 42 out of the 49 known patients who have contracted the measles were not vaccinated.

One patient had only received a partial vaccination, and the status of the six others was unknown. Health officials suspect the outbreak can be traced to exposure at the Portland International Airport, the Moda Center and other possible sites in and around the Portland area.

A separate group of cases have been reported among the Orthodox Jewish community in New York State.

What ties these two diverse population groups together is they are both at the heart of an anti-vaccina-

tion movement in the U.S.

Whether refusal to be vaccinated is based upon religious conviction or the misguided belief that children can be healthier without them, many parents are refusing to have their children immunized. They place us all at higher risk.

As one Washington state epidemiologist stated, “This is entirely preventable.”

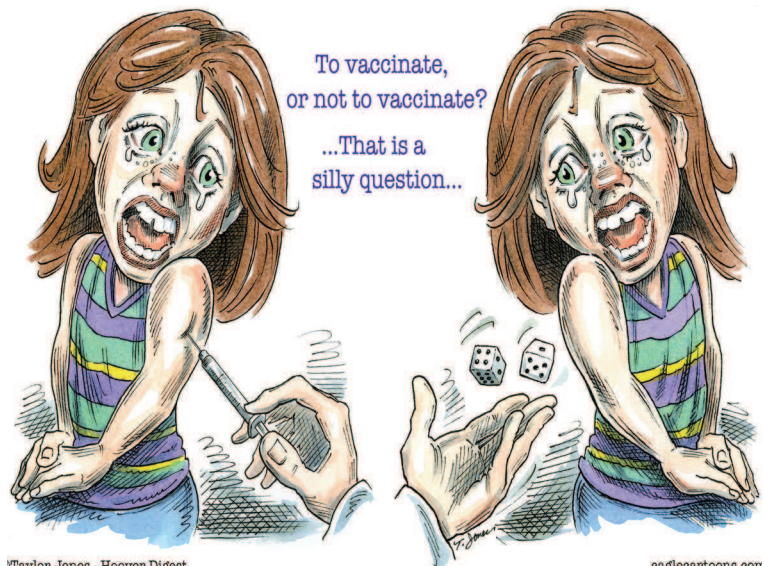
It is indeed preventable, but only if we can successfully inoculate the entire population, so as to protect the most vulnerable among us — the young, the aged and those with already-compromised immune systems.

Perhaps with the passage of time, we as a society have forgotten what terrible consequences these maladies can wreak upon human populations when left unchecked. Maybe it’s time for a new round of education, just as the older generation among us received back in the 1950s and ’60s when these vaccinations were becoming widespread.

Meanwhile, the apparently growing ranks of “anti-vaxxers,” as they have become known, are holding proven science, best health care practices and the rest of us hostage.

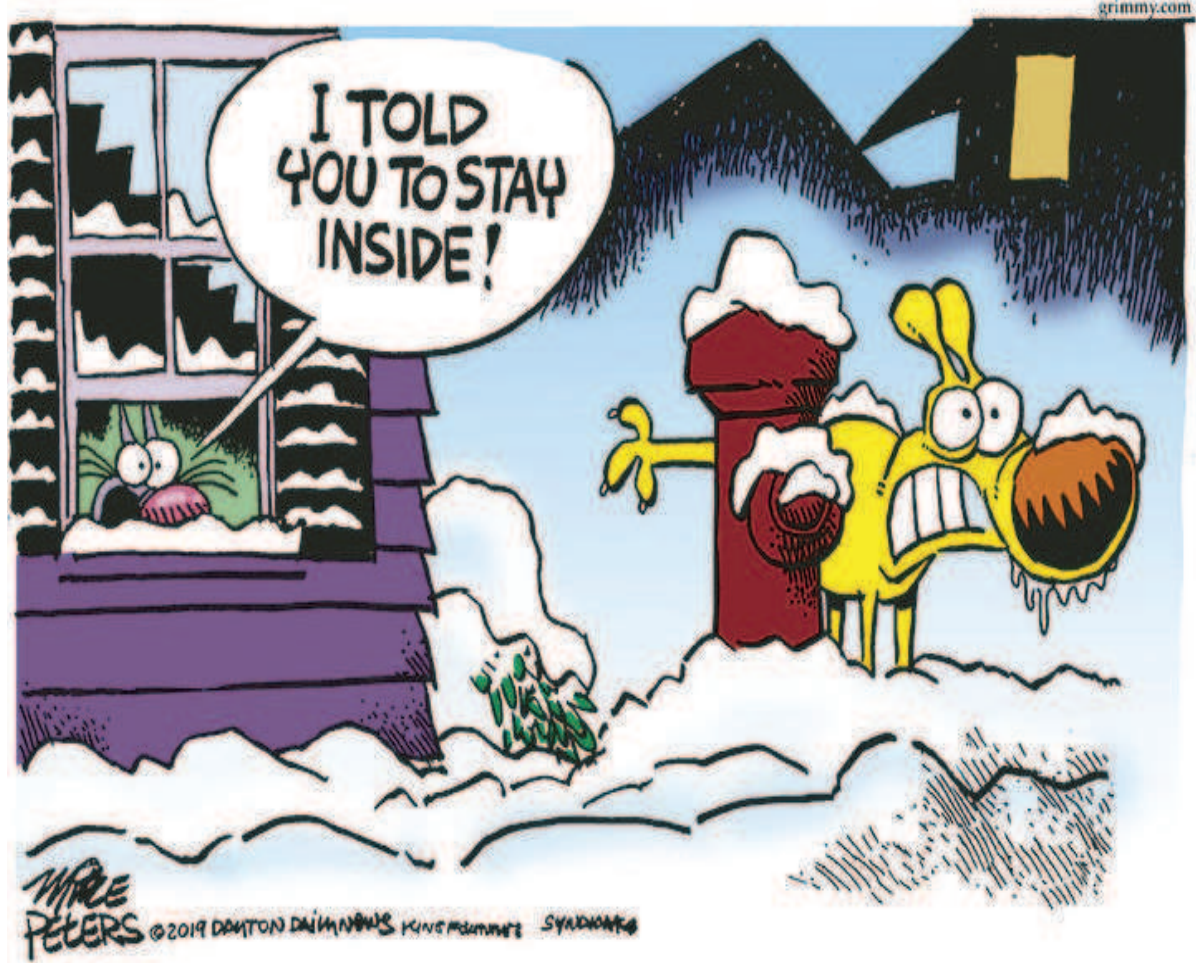
If you have children, please ensure that they are vaccinated and follow the recommended immunization schedule that virtually every state and local health department advocates.

Do it for them, and do it for all of us.



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One Jeep, two boys, a thousand laughs

It started with knock knock jokes:

Knock, knock? Who’s there? CowSays. CowSays Who? No! Cow Says Moo!

Knock, knock? Who’s there? A little old lady. A little old lady who? Wow! All this time I had no idea you could yodel!

Knock, knock? Who’s there? Mustache. Mustache who? I mustache you a question, but I’ll shave it until later

Knock, knock? Who’s there? To. To who? It’s to whom.

Then progressed to riddles: Q: What has a head, a tail, is brown and has no legs? A: A penny

Q: David’s father has three sons : Snap, Crackle and ____ ? A: David

Q: There are two monkeys on a tree and one jumps off. Why does the other monkey jump too? A: Monkey see, monkey do

Q: A farmer has 17 sheep and all but nine die. How many are left alive? A: 9

Then on to corny jokes: Q: What is the worst vegetable to have on a ship? A: A leek

Q: What did Sir Lancelot wear to bed? A: A knight gown

Q: Why are teddy bears never hungry? A: Because they’re always stuffed.



Brianna Walker

Q: What did one toilet say to the other toilet? A: You look flushed.

Q: Which side of a duck has more feathers? A: The outside

The two 9-year-old boys in the back seat of the Jeep repeating every silly joke they had ever heard, and when those ran out, they began creating their own:

Q: What do spies eat instead of McDonald’s? A: Spydonalds

Q: What do you call a shark that bites? A: A shark bite

Q: Why did the chicken marry the crocodile? A: So he could say crocokoladoo

Many times I tried to get them to look out the window and enjoy the beautiful scenery of Moab — but my nephew had “been there and done that” and didn’t seem interested in the red rock arches or the crazy trails we were following my brother-in-law through, and my son was too excited about seeing his cousin — so the jokes continued. Finally I couldn’t take it anymore. I began to fight fire with fireflies:

Q: What did the firefly do when he ran into the fan? A: Nothing he was de-lighted.

Q: What did the comedian say when he took off his clothes? A: Haven’t you ever seen a comic strip?

Q: Where do Volkswagens go when they get old? A: The old Volks home

Q: What was the last thing that went through the bug’s mind as he hit the windshield? A: His butt

Q: What happened when the cannibal showed up late to the dinner party? A: He got the cold shoulder

It lasted all day, until the boys were begging me to stop with the corny dinner jokes. I thought about trying, but I just couldn’t quit cold turkey.

The jokes weren’t always funny, but I still laughed when they got to the punch line. They were making forever memories even without realizing it.

The holidays may be behind us, but take a moment to look around at your friends and family (even when they bombard you for hours with corny jokes) and remember the good times, the funny memories and count the blessings that are in your life.

Brianna Walker occasionally writes about the Farmer’s Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.

Shooting the Breeze: Get involved

I thought long and hard about this article. I really didn’t want to write it, but I think it needs to be done. Today, I want to talk politics. Now stay with me, because I’m not going to try to talk you into marching to my political drum. No, I am going to give you the benefit of the doubt and believe that you are smart enough to develop your own opinions about world events.

I do want to get you to be more politically involved. The time is long past that we can sit quietly by and hope that the world will leave us alone. This year in Oregon alone more than 20 bills have been introduced that impact sportsmen and women in this state. These include bills to limit ammunition purchases to 20 rounds per month, to restrict firearm magazines to five rounds, to raise boat registration fees by 32 percent, to require ATV riders older than 16 to have driver’s and ATV licenses and to require non-motorized boat users to have a waterway access permit. You can check out a more complete list with expla-



Rod Carpenter

nations at oregonhunters.org/legislative-news.

You may believe we need more restrictions, or you may think we don’t, but whatever you believe, you need to make your voice heard. As we all know, it’s the squeaky wheel that gets the grease. I’m not saying you need to organize a march, or start a political action committee. The simplest way is to send an email to your representatives and express your opinion. They work for you, but if they don’t know what you want, they can’t vote your way. It doesn’t even have to be a long email filled with arguments and details about the bill. A simple “Dear Senator Deceitful, I believe that raising hunting license fees by 200 percent is a great idea. Respectfully, Mr. Insane.” is all it takes. You can even list the bills you agree with and those you don’t.

Instead of taking that social

media quiz to find out which soap opera star you identify with, take a minute to look up who your representatives are for your area. They will have an email address attached. Shoot them an email voicing your opinion and you’re back to looking at kitten videos in no time. In Grant County, Lynn Findley (Rep.LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov) is our state representative, and Cliff Bentz (Sen. CliffBentz@oregonlegislature.gov) is our senator. Add them to your email contact list and contact them whenever you want. That is what you are paying them for after all.

I have my opinions, and you have yours. Love wolves or hate them, love the Second Amendment or want to abolish it, you need to speak up, or Clackamas County is going to get to decide how you get to live your life.

While you’re on your email, shoot us one too with your thoughts and suggestions at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com.

Rod Carpenter is a husband, father and hunting fool.

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- Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: (503) 986-1180. Website: leg.state.or.us (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).
- Oregon Legislative Information** — (For updates on bills, services, capitol or messages for legislators) — 800-332-2313.
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1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION RATES (including online access)	
Grant County	\$40
Everywhere else in U.S.....	\$51
Outside Continental U.S.....	\$60

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER send address changes to: Blue Mountain Eagle 195 N. Canyon Blvd. John Day, OR 97845-1187 USPS 226-340

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