

Daily Herald

Paddock Publications Inc.
Founded in 1872

Your Opinion

Editorial Board

Jim Slusher, Deputy Managing Editor / Opinion
Renee Trappe, Downstate Group Editor

John Lampinen, Editor
Jim Baumann, Managing Editor
Diane Dungey, Senior Deputy Managing Editor
Peter Nenni, Deputy Managing Editor
Lisa Miner, Metro Editor

“Our aim:
To fear God,
tell the truth
and make money.”

H.C. Paddock
1852-1935



Your views Most days, the Opinion page is built around our view. Today, we turn it over to you.

A matter of priorities

It takes a special kind of person to believe teachers should have guns in their classrooms but not a salary increase.

Jake Serafini
Carpentersville

Where's the need for prayer at meetings?

Recently the Daily Herald had a front-page story headlined, “Some say halt prayers at county board meetings,” and the focus was on invocations given at the start of DuPage County Board meetings and Wheaton City Council meetings. Board member Dawn DeSart said she wanted prayers to be discontinued because most of the prayers given are Christian prayers, yet we are a diverse community of Christians, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, atheists, agnostics and other constituents and therefore we should have a separation of church and state. But county board Chairman Dan Cronin said that an invocation is a wonderful way to start the board meetings. I myself have a different viewpoint.

When I am preparing to vote at elections of public officials, I consider their qualifications, credentials, abilities and talents to administer our government organizations. I do not consider that if they are so qualified, I will ever need to pray for them at council meetings, nor do I feel any need to pray for myself at these public meetings. When I pray, I am focusing on my own personal relationship with God and I can pray in my home and in my church. I do not wish to pray publicly inasmuch as in the Bible in Matthew 6:5-8, we are told, “When you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners that they may be seen by men. But you, when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

So, I see no need to pray in public at government meetings and that should be the answer to the question whether we should have prayers or not at public government meetings.

Theodore M. Utchen
Wheaton

Another wake-up call for all of us

On Jan. 2, President Trump boasted to reporters: “They say I am the most popular president in the history of the Republican Party.”

In his Jan. 1 opinion piece “Trump’s reckoning is under way,” Eugene Robinson writes: “Anyone who thinks Trump is a master politician is wrong. He is a master illusionist Trump is talented at making it appear he has more than he really does — more money, more respect, more support.” This observation brought to mind Les Hinton’s selection of Tom Bower’s 1995 book, “Maxwell: The Final Verdict” as one of the five best books on

Guest view

A resolution for Illinois employers: Hire more people with disabilities and veterans

Michelle, who became paralyzed from chest to toes due to a car crash in 2002, recently earned bachelor and master’s degrees from Roosevelt University. As of November 2018, the Chicago woman is now gainfully employed with CompPsych, the world’s largest provider of employee assistance programs, servicing more than 45,000 organizations and 100 million individuals throughout the U.S.



Janet P. Szyk

Megan, of Arlington Heights, who is visually impaired, impressed her supervisors with her performance and went from extern to employee at an Arlington Heights Walgreens.

Tina, of Chicago Heights, who is visually impaired, was hired this past summer at a Chicago-area Target store. Since joining the store, she has consistently received high marks for successfully carrying out all her tasks and for her exemplary customer service.

William, a veteran from Chicago who had trouble securing employment due to a lack of computer skills, received extensive training and is now flourishing as an agent with the Illinois Tollway Customer Service Center.

What do these four talented people have in common? They are among hundreds of individuals who are disabled or veterans whose lives have been dramatically changed thanks to special training



COURTESY OF VINCENT JOHNSON FOR OTHERVERTICAL
Sarah Bennett, left, assistant director of Employment Services at The Chicago Lighthouse, speaks with Marina Salman, a Lighthouse scholarship recipient and program participant.

they received at The Chicago Lighthouse and other similar organizations, which in turn, led to fulfilling job opportunities with companies like Target, Walgreens and others.

It’s sad to say, however, that Michelle, Megan, Tina and William are more the exception than the rule when it comes to employment of people with disabilities and veterans.

Despite bringing a variety of skills to the table, being creative and possessing a hearty work ethic, far too many individuals who are blind or disabled, as well as veterans, suffer from an unacceptably high unemployment rate and as such, are an

untapped resource.

In fact, national statistics show that approximately 70 percent of individuals who are blind are unemployed. According to Census Bureau data from 2016, only 36 percent of working age individuals with disabilities were employed while over three-quarters (79 percent) of adults without disabilities had jobs. Statistics concerning the employment of Veterans are equally sobering. It is estimated that nearly 30 percent of our courageous ex-military men and women are jobless.

At The Chicago Lighthouse, we are changing that. In the past few years, we have created hundreds of

good-paying jobs for members of the disabled and veteran communities by aggressively seeking out members of both groups for positions in our Customer Care Centers and in other key positions at our organization. In addition, we provide computer training, rehabilitation, counseling, resume preparation and other services to help qualify people for positions in both the public and private sectors.

We salute the efforts of Walgreens, Target, Mariano’s, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Lettuce Entertain You Restaurants and others who have partnered with us and followed our lead in opening their doors to more individuals with disabilities and vets.

However, much more needs to be done. Those unemployment rates remain way too high. With the arrival of the New Year, we want to sound a clarion call and urge more Chicago-area businesses to dedicate themselves to hiring greater numbers of members of the disabled and veteran communities.

They will come to realize how hiring these individuals will not only create a more inclusive and vibrant environment, but will help boost the bottom line. Furthermore, statistics have shown higher retention rates for people with disabilities across the board among employers.

It is also the right thing to do.

Dr. Janet P. Szyk is president and CEO of The Chicago Lighthouse, one of the nation’s most comprehensive social service organizations assisting people who are blind, visually impaired, disabled or veterans.

Hopefully, ACA ruling will not stand

A federal-court decision declaring the Affordable Care Act (ACA) unconstitutional could have serious consequences for solo entrepreneurs like me. As of 2013, nearly one in three self-employed adults were uninsured. By 2016, however, the uninsured rate for those individuals had fallen to 19.2 percent, a drop of 35 percent following the implementation of the ACA.

But the ACA is about more than statistics — it’s about giving people the chance to shape their own economic destiny. Since the law makes it so much easier for the self-employed to obtain their own health insurance coverage, many more aspiring entrepreneurs have escaped “job lock” and been willing to go out on their own to start new ventures.

If the ACA is no longer an option for this group, however, many will be forced to close their businesses and go back to working for someone else just so they can have health insurance. For the good of the U.S. economy and American entrepreneurship, the constitutionality of the ACA must be upheld. I hope this terrible court decision is eventually overturned.

Jessica Jolly
Evanston

giant of the press.

According to Bower, Robert Maxwell, who owned the New York Daily News, London Daily Mirror and much, much more, was a crook a blowhard and a boaster — committing crimes even as many suspected there was something very fishy about him. Bower summed up his conclusion about Maxwell’s success, a conclusion that is also applicable to the Maxwell-like giants in today’s world of business and politics: “(He) prospered because hundreds of otherwise intelligent people willfully suspended any moral judgment and succumbed to their avarice and self-interest.”

So what has been wrought by “hundreds of otherwise intelligent people” with the success of Donald Trump, the giant master showman and illusionist, who was elected to

the presidency of the United States? Joan Chittister, O.S.B., a Benedictine nun, theologian and author, has an answer worth pondering in her Jan. 2, column in The National Catholic Reporter: “For the first time in modern American history, the presidency, the great stabilizer of American government, is being destabilized by the president himself.” It appears to be another wake-up call for all of us.

Frank G. Splitz
Mount Prospect

How can we not insure against climate disaster?

None of the recent letters to the Herald on global warming have asked the important questions. Is it possible that mankind is having an

impact on global warming that will make the earth uninhabitable? If it is possible, how can we justify not doing anything about it? How many things are more important than the future of life on earth?

Here’s something I would like to ask global-warming deniers — do you own insurance? Car insurance, health insurance, home insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, maybe insurance for a major purchase?

If the answer is yes, that means you are willing to pay money, probably a significant amount of money, to protect yourself from catastrophe.

You don’t know if that catastrophe will ever happen, but it might. The odds are high that your premiums will exceed your claims. After all, that’s what feeds the insurance industry.

So how do you reconcile taking a voluntary hit to your wallet to protect yourself from risk, but not being willing to make a sacrifice to protect the entire planet?

If your answer is that there is nothing to worry about, then I’m sorry, but you don’t know that. Not for certain. Nobody does.

Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are at record highs and carbon dioxide contributes to global warming. Polar icecaps are shrinking, glaciers are retreating, ocean temperatures are rising. These are facts, not speculation, not some esoteric modeling.

A huge majority of scientific experts are telling us that we are at risk and that we can take steps to mitigate that risk. I trust them a lot more than the minority of politicians, none of them experts, who say otherwise. Trusting scientists over politicians on a science question — why is this so hard? Sometimes I wonder why mankind is not extinct already.

Bill Myers
Buffalo Grove

LET’S TALK



<https://www.facebook.com/DailyHeraldVoiceoftheSuburbs/>

Join the Daily Herald editorial board and our friends on Facebook for stimulating conversation every day about society, politics and life in the suburbs. These comments are excerpted from several discussions following editorials in our series urging the new Congress and General Assembly to lead with cooperation and collaboration.

What a wonderful year 2019 would be if members of BOTH Houses of Congress followed the sound advice put forth in this editorial. — **Dan Blackburn**

In other words, you don’t want the Democratic majority to follow the example of the GOP majority that conducted six House Benghazi investigations? — **Paul Froehlich**

I agree with all the DH’s recommendations except for the first one. Republicans used criminal investigations for political theater, distraction and deflection. The democrats are fully justified in



criminally investigating Trump as he is not a candidate but the “president.” — **Louis Guagenti**

Unfortunately, the Dems will attack Trump ... just like the Republicans went after Obama. Mr. Pragmatism is still a ‘no-show’ in congress! — **Michael Turgeon**

Curious absence of advice on War. Our forces deployed in Combat

in many places under Bush era Authorizations for Use of Military Force. The War in Afghanistan going badly with the Taliban controlling large parts of the Country. It’s Congress’s job to authorize War and they’ve been derelict on their oversight. — **Bill Baar**

This last Congress refused to hold Donald Trump accountable. This Congress needs to do that. — **John Kohlstrand**

Stop investigating and start legislating in a bipartisan manner. Otherwise, you will be on your way out in 2020. — **Gerry Paquette**

dh Even more letters online
[dailyherald.com/topics/letterstotheeditor/](https://www.dailyherald.com/topics/letterstotheeditor/)

Join the conversation

We welcome your comments (300-word limit). Letters must include your full name, town and phone number. Letters are subject to editing and may be posted online. We do not guarantee publication of every letter.

Email: fencepost@dailyherald.com
Mail: P.O. Box 280, Arlington Heights, IL 60006