

Standard online reader survey



A doctor recently examining President Trump said he's like most Americans in that he doesn't exercise.

Q: Do you exercise on a weekly basis?

YES or NO

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Supporting circus just supports animal abuse

TO THE EDITOR:

Thirty-five years ago, I took my children to the Civic Center for the circus. One of the elephants was extremely sick and they kept the show on instead of taking it out of the show. Needless to say, I have never been to another circus and I have been a crusader to stop these types of shows.

The headline in your paper states, "A ride they won't forget." I imagine the elephant wishes he could forget!

These animals are confined to small spaces, from town to town, all across the United States. It's such a sad existence for these and the other majestic animals. Before you buy that ticket to the circus/ show, stop and think what you are supporting. It is time these God-given creatures deserve the life and compassion they so richly deserve.

Linda Salter
Meiser Lane
McMinnville

If opioids so bad, why doesn't FDA ban them?

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm reading articles where lawsuits are being filed on opioids. Apparently these suits will go after the manufacturers of these prescription drugs.

An honest question should be are people doctor shopping to get more than one doctor to prescribe these drugs? Should doctors also be held liable for issuing these prescriptions?

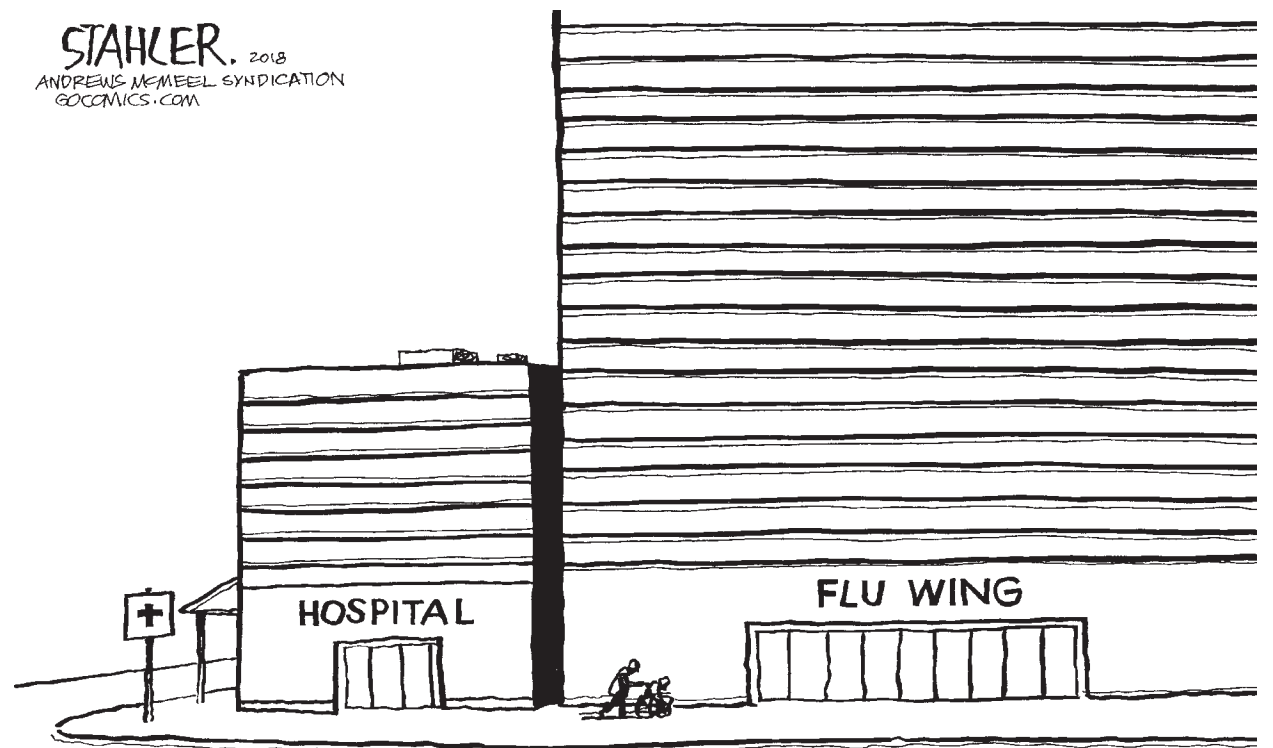
It's not that a person does not need a pain prescription, but to prescribe these drugs for a prolonged period should be questioned.

Another point that should be looked at is the FDA has to agree for a manufacturer to produce and sell a drug in the United States. If it's so bad, why can't law enforcement stop the manufacture and sale of these painkillers?

It looks as if it's easy to make a lot of noise, but apparently it's not easy, or even acceptable, to be hard line and stop the sale of these drugs.

Miles Snider
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President Trump touts record

President Donald Trump used his first State of the Union Address last Tuesday night to extol the GOP's achievements during his first year in office, and to appeal for political unity to make 2018 even better for all Americans.

Speaking directly to a joint session of Congress, and indirectly to the American people and beyond, President Trump hailed what he characterized as the "extraordinary success" of his administration's first year.

On the economic front, Trump touted the GOP's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act for providing tremendous relief for the American people. He cited how "within less than a month of the bill signing, over 260 businesses across all industries announced raises, bonuses, and new investments directly benefiting over 3 million Americans," with more to come, including larger paychecks for Americans starting this month.

Offering a rare "olive branch" to the Democrats in Congress, Trump said, "Tonight, I call upon all of us to set aside our differences, to seek out common ground, and to summon the unity we need to deliver for the people." His call for unity received applause from most Republicans, but practically none from desultory Democrats. Sen. Chuck Schumer and House counterpart Nancy Pelosi looked like they had just shared a bad clam. Pelosi called the middle-class tax relief money "chump change" and "crumbs."

Trump devoted much of his roughly 80-minute speech to recognizing and honoring American heroes, ordinary people who had done extraordinary things for others. Present in the

audience as special guests of the Trumps, they included a police officer and his wife, who adopted the child of a heroin-addicted mother, and an Army staff sergeant who risked his life to save a fellow soldier in combat.

President Trump also paid tribute to the parents of Otto Warmbier, the Virginia college student who died following his 17-month detention in North Korea. And he praised North Korean defector Ji Seong-ho for his daring escape on crutches after losing his leg in captivity.

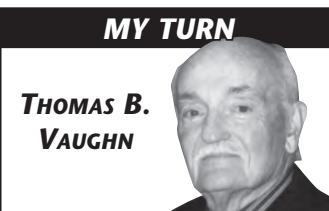
"Today he has a new leg, but Seong-ho, I understand you still keep those crutches," said Trump. The young man responded by waving the crutches proudly over his head.

On the contentious issue of illegal immigration, President Trump reiterated his proposal to grant legal status and a path to citizenship to the so-called "Dreamers," youngsters illegally brought to the United States by their parents. The quid pro quo for that would be Democratic support in Congress for stricter enforcement of immigration laws, building a wall on the southern border with Mexico, and changing immigration laws to give priority to higher-skilled immigrants.

According to polls I've seen, Trump's first State of the Union Address was widely acclaimed by GOP voters, including his loyal base. It also received favorable reviews from roughly 73 percent of independent voters. Not bad for starters.

As for President Trump's second year in office, to paraphrase him, we'll see.

Retired Army Col. Thomas B. Vaughn can be reached at tbovwmi@blomand.net.



MY TURN
THOMAS B. VAUGHN

A clash of cultures that's Super

Last month, the Rev. Peter M. Donohue, the president of Villanova University on Philadelphia's Main Line, insisted that the organist play "On Eagle's Wings" at Mass before the NFC Championship Game.

This did not escape the attention of John J. Brennan, the former chairman and CEO of the Vanguard investment group, who has roots in both places competing in the Super Bowl. Vanguard's headquarters is 25 miles west of Philadelphia, whose Eagles are underdogs in the big game. Brennan grew up eight miles north of Boston and 40 miles from Gillette Stadium, home of the New England Patriots, the oddsmakers' choice.

"I'm living in Super Bowl hell," says Brennan. "I love the Eagles, but I'm a Patriots originalist."

He's one of the few with even a trace of ambiguity over this clash between two East Coast cities with Colonial heritages, powerhouse universities, sprawling medical complexes — and sports fans regarded by outsiders as utterly obnoxious.

Perhaps it is significant Massachusetts has contributed five presidents (I'm including Calvin Coolidge, born in Vermont, and George H.W. Bush, who was born in Massachusetts but is more identified with Texas) to the one produced by Pennsylvania (the lowly James Buchanan).

None of this makes any difference to the Super Bowl, of course, but outside the gridiron, the rivalry between Boston and Philadelphia may strike most Americans — and surely those beyond the Appalachian regions — as the narcissism of small differences. Or

at least a whole lot of narcissism.

William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, gave Philadelphia its label in 1682, confecting a place name out of "the city of brotherly love." Oliver Wendell Holmes, the poet and essayist, gave Boston its high-flying "Hub of the Universe" label in 1858. Neither description has the slightest relation to the truth.

One has an Oyster House on Philadelphia's Sansom Street (founded in 1976), the other has the Union Oyster House (founded in 1826 and the favorite of both Daniel Webster and John F. Kennedy).

Then again, Boston has Parker House rolls (developed 150 years ago at the Boston hotel on School Street),

while there are two Philadelphia rolls: one a sushi dish made of smoked salmon, cream cheese and cucumber and the other a large wad of cash, wrapped in a \$100 bill on the outside. Philadelphia has Rocky (the heroic figure at the center of more than a half-dozen films), while the Boston area has Egg Rock (an island outcropping in Nahant Bay about two miles off the coast of Swampscott, the beach town where I grew up).

The Super Bowl is all about Philadelphia Cream Cheese versus Boston cream pie, a sushi roll from Philadelphia versus a dinner roll from Boston, a cheesesteak on Passyunk Avenue in Philadelphia versus a lobster roll at Legal Sea Foods at Copley Place in Boston — and two East Coast cities united by their common hatred of New York.

David M. Shribman is executive editor of the Post-Gazette (dshribman@post-gazette.com).

JUST A THOUGHT

LISA HOBBS



Putting myself under quarantine

I don't get under the weather very often. When I do, it's on like Donkey Kong and I'm a royally sick princess.

Before you ask, I have no idea what I had. I did not seek the advice of a doctor, despite the repeated requests of my boyfriend to go. Instead, I sought the recluse of my bedroom — locking myself in like a hermit and texting out requests for more water, chicken noodle soup, Kleenex, etc. to be placed outside my bedroom door.

My symptoms: cold chills, fever, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing, headache, cough, and extreme congestion. I did not have any muscle cramps or aching.

I knew I was having sinus issues on Thursday, Jan. 25. I contributed them to allergies, which is the usual culprit. By Friday evening at work, the chills kicked in and I knew it was a little something more than sinus issues. It was time to go.

I sadly canceled my plans for that night, went to the store for provisions, and went home. I alerted my children to the fact I was on my way home and I was sick. They're adults and they understand that mom is quarantining herself in the bedroom.

My goal: stay as hydrated as possible. Toward that endeavor, I started drinking glasses of warm water on a regular basis. I was at home from Friday evening until Wednesday morning. I drank about six gallons of water. I sipped on it all the time. If I fell asleep, I drank a glass as soon as I woke up.

I'm not a fan of taking medication. However, I used saline mist and inhaled enough vaporub to kill someone. If you can overdose on either, I probably would have. I used about five boxes of Kleenexes that contain 130 per box. By those calculations, I blew my nose 650 times. Impressive, I know. Bask in the magnificence that was me. I can feel the jealousy. I'm thankful it was the lotion kind.

The worst came Sunday. When I would lie flat, I had a difficult time breathing through my nose. By that night, I knew I had to sleep sitting up. I attempted to sleep in my moon chair. It wasn't all that bad. I've fallen asleep in that chair before. Never as a necessity though.

Sunday was an awesome weather day. I sat on the front porch in order to get some fresh air. I probably looked foolish to everyone who passed. I thought, "Mind your business. Nothing to see here. Woman with a blanket."

Monday was much better. The fever and chills were gone. I started sanitizing my bedroom. It felt good to sleep in a clean, fresh bed on Monday night.

I stayed home one more day to make sure I was no longer contagious. I returned to work on Wednesday.

I pampered myself as much as possible and watched enough daytime TV to drive me crazy. Being a princess isn't easy.

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