

Standard online reader survey



Q: Do you think we've made meaningful strides toward racial equality over the past 50 years?

YES 73 percent
NO 27 percent

GUEST EDITORIAL

Drinking coffee should not be cause for alarm

Don't worry if you're coffee-addled: You and your morning ritual are safe.

Despite a Los Angeles judge's ruling that in California coffee must carry a warning label, there's little cause for concern. Your morning wakeup routine doesn't have to be disturbed due to health concerns.

California's Proposition 65 labeling certainly delivers a jolt, notifying consumers of the presence of chemicals the state has listed as causing cancer and birth defects.

And while it's smart to be cautious about food and drink, here's something to ease your caffeine-frenzied mind. California's coffee shop warning relates to acrylamide, a chemical produced when coffee beans are roasted.

Acrylamide has been shown to cause cancer in rodents, but that's when they are given doses up to 1,000 to 10,000 times higher than what people might be exposed to in foods, according to the American Cancer Society.

In 2016, the International Agency for Research on Cancer cited a lack of evidence that coffee drinking causes cancer in humans. In fact, drinking coffee can reduce people's risk of

The Seattle Times

developing common cancers and heart disease. That's right, it can reduce your risks.

A *British Medical Journal* review of more than 200 studies published last fall found that drinking three or four cups of coffee a day "is associated with health benefits across a range of diseases," including reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

California's toxics labeling initiative is well intended, but by attempting to condense an entire body of scientific literature into a placard, the java warnings are not helpful. The label becomes a scare tactic.

Such labeling may steer some consumers away from a product that may actually help reduce their cancer risk. Therein lies the contradiction we so often see in food studies. One study will suggest a food is harmless, while another study will sound alarms. It can create confusion.

State-mandated warning aside, don't be afraid of your morning — or afternoon — coffee. Embrace the refreshing jolt coffee is known to provide.



Trump's war on farmers

The president has triggered a trade war with China, and the bombs are falling on his allies in the Farm Belt.

Trump's decision to impose tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, plus \$50 billion in additional products, has provoked two waves of retaliation by China against American farmers who export pork, beef, soybeans and sorghum. *The Wall Street Journal* reports those measures are deliberately aimed at hurting Trump's base, and they are succeeding.

The Brookings Institution calculated the impact of China's initial sanctions against farm products: 65 percent of the affected workers live in counties carried by Trump.

Sen. Pat Roberts, a Kansas Republican who chairs the Agriculture Committee, sputtered in anger when asked about the effects of the president's actions. "These are the people who voted for the president," complained Roberts. "These are his people. One county in Kansas even voted for him 90 percent, and they're not going to be happy at all about this."

With global prices dropping and competition rising, notes Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, "This could not be happening at a worse time for American agriculture."

The trade war is not the only way Trump's policies are punishing agriculture. The president's crackdown on immigration has already been shrinking the supply of workers willing to pick crops, pluck poultry and pack meat.

A year ago, Duvall told the *Financial Times* that "half or more of farm workers in some areas are undocumented immigrants and (their) members have already begun to report shortages."

The president's tariff tantrum is part of a wider pattern of protectionism. He's already pulled out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiated by his predecessor, and repeatedly threatens to "terminate" NAFTA.

"American farmers appear to be the first casualties of an escalating trade war," former Democratic senator Max Baucus, chairman of Farmers For Free Trade, said in the *New York Times*.

Hog farmers alone sent more than \$1 billion worth of pork to China last year. Jim Monroe, spokesman for the National Pork Producers Council, told the *Wall Street Journal*: "Exports are the lifeblood of the industry."

As for immigration, labor recruiter Ray Wiley said, "There's a lot of unskilled work in the U.S. that Americans will not do, and these people are doing it."

And they're doing it in places that voted heavily for Trump. Take, for instance, the Texas town of Cactus, where a *Washington Post* reporter describes the workforce at a local meat packer that sells hamburger to Burger King and steaks to Walmart. Cactus is in Moore County, which voted 75.5 percent for Trump.

"There are Burmese meat cutters a few years removed from refugee camps in Thailand and Malaysia," writes reporter Nick Miroff. "Chuckers from Sudan, tall and strong, who specialize in separating the spinal cord from the side of beef swinging on a moving chain."

Farm country like Moore County helped elect Trump the first time. Will those voters support him again if his policies continue to jeopardize their economic future?

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COLUMNISTS

STEVE & COKIE ROBERTS



lose this child. Thank you for all your prayers to that effect."

In the days of searching from across the country, Emily and Christopher paid for a hotel and other lodgings for the couple. But that's a way to blow through limited funds quickly and offers no kind of stability. Chapman wrote: "Our prayer is that we'll be able to find a situation that they can afford for the short-term, and that we will be able to save or raise enough money to give them a down payment on a mobile home, which is by far the best long-term solution for them."

In other posts on Facebook and a blog, she's shared additional details about the pain of infertility and how she and her husband felt the call to adopt. She's also explained how they found themselves connected with this couple and their unborn child sooner than they expected, having planned to do some additional saving first. Friends have reached out to help with financial contributions on a YouCaring page.

Chapman reflected: "Facebook has its drawbacks, but it's also an amazing gift for which I am daily giving thanks. Without the people it's connected me to, I wouldn't have our wonderful adoption attorney, a baby waiting to become our son ... housing for his birth parents, and the prayers and material support that is making all this possible. ... Social media is — sometimes — everything it's cracked up to be."

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Positive side of Facebook

"Somehow, I didn't think preparing for motherhood would entail looking for used RVs online," Emily Stimpson Chapman recently wrote in a Facebook post. "When do I get to the shopping for diaper bags and strollers part?"

You could say Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's responsible for miracles. In the midst of news about data security and lack thereof, I was watching a miracle unfold on the controversial social-media platform. We're often noticing with sadness how superficial social media has made us. But when you can make use of unprecedented connections for the good, real beauty can transpire.

Chapman, as you've deduced, is an expectant mother. She and her husband live near Pittsburgh and are adopting from a couple in California. This past week or so has brought all sorts of worries, as the birth mother faced the prospect of homelessness. Emily and her husband, Christopher, are determined not only to welcome a little baby boy into the world later this year, but to do whatever they can to help the woman who will give birth to him.

As Chapman explained in one of her posts: Maternity homes weren't an option because the birth dad needs somewhere to stay, too, and the couple wants to try to make a go of life together. Social services proved no help, overstuffed and overburdened as such agencies often are.

Chapman explained: "California is an easy place to find yourself homeless, and we don't want that to happen to them. We also don't want to

THE SCOOP

JAMES CLARK



County in store for high turnover

Local voters were feeling a little frisky four years ago when they took to the polls and elected 10 new members to the Warren County Commission.

It gave the county's governing body a 41.6 percent turnover rate in just one election.

To be fair, the high turnover was caused by some incumbents not seeking re-election. Herschel Wells and Kenneth Rogers both vacated their seats to run for County Executive with Wells winning that matchup. Bessie Smithson decided not to run for health reasons.

The end result was the Warren County Commission, at 24 members strong, saw 10 new faces get elected in 2014. With voting in the Democratic Primary beginning this Wednesday and the General Election just around the corner in August, it's appropriate to wonder how many newcomers will be seated around the commission table in September.

My thinking is we will have around 10 new county commissioners again, giving county government a massive makeover in just two election cycles.

To touch on the basics, our county has 12 districts and two representatives are elected in each district. Examining the ballot, there are only four districts where I feel somewhat confident both incumbents will be voted back into office.

We know three seats will be vacated by choice. Charles Morgan, who I think is one of the best members of the County Commission, has opted not to seek re-election. So has Wayne Copeland. They are taking a break from politics.

Terry Bell is also not seeking re-election to his seat, but it's not because he wants a break. He is running for County Executive.

So that's three. What about those other seven seats? If my prediction holds true and we do have around 10 new members, who's getting the boot? I'll refrain from doing a district by district breakdown about who will win and lose, but I think 10 is a fair betting line with the actual number likely falling between 9 and 11.

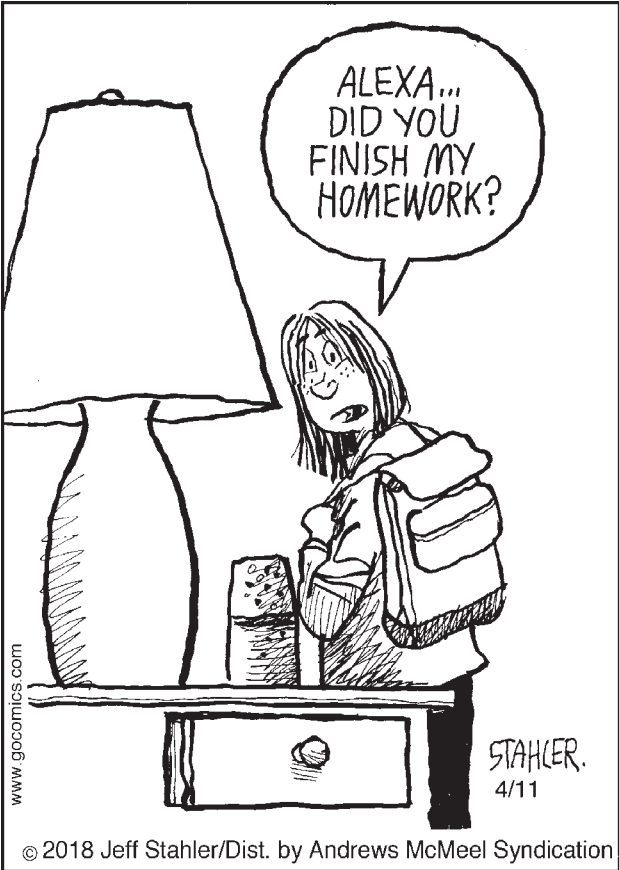
As for key issues over the next four years, I can think of nothing more beneficial, more therapeutic to this entire community, than a major fitness initiative promoted by our Warren County Commission. When you're overweight and don't feel your best, it impacts every part of your life — right down to your sleep.

If you're not healthy, you're more likely to miss work or be less productive while you're there. If you're not healthy, you're more likely to stay couped up inside because you lack the energy to tackle the great outdoors. If you're not healthy, you're not as happy.


A get-fit initiative is a low-cost project that's completely doable and it could make a tremendous impact on our collective quality of life.

Instead of the same, tired pledges to bring jobs and support education, let's snatch this moment to find a new direction. To the new members soon to take a seat on the Warren County Commission, nothing will benefit our community more than better overall fitness.

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