

opinion

TELEGRAPH HERALD

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The Telegraph Herald's mission is to be the preferred provider of local news, information and advertising content in the markets we serve.

letter from the editor

Join conversation about access to health, wellness

BY AMY GILLIGAN

Telegraph Herald executive editor



This week brings our fourth in a series of community conversations around diversity, equity and inclusion in a collaboration between TH Media and the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. This week, we'll be talking about access to health and wellness, and Hodge serves as the event sponsor.

In August, we kicked off this important series of conversations with the topic of housing, following up with a discussion on workforce and then one on education issues. We've identified seven topics total and will host the events over the next few months, seeking community engagement along the way.

This week's event will be 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 12, at Steeple Square, 101 E. 15th St. in Dubuque, with the presentation and a panel discussion beginning at 6. Participants can anticipate an honest conversation aimed at identifying challenges, resources and opportunities related to leveling the playing field when it comes to access to health care and preventive wellness. We've reached out to our key community stakeholders in this arena including MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center, Unity Point-Health Finley Hospital, Crescent Community Health Center, as well as local public health officials. Over the process of putting the pieces in place for this session, I've come to see that while we've made enormous strides in this area (remember that two decades ago we didn't have Crescent Community Health Center), there's much work to be done to ensure that all populations have access to the health care options many of us take for granted.

Our partners from the Community Foundation will share some key information from new data they have collected and will invite everyone to participate in future conversations that will help build Dubuque's Community Equity Profile — a guide for the community to understand its strengths and opportunities to improve access to critical resources so all people can thrive.

For more information, to register or check out recordings of previous conversations, go to deidbq.com. We hope to see you there.

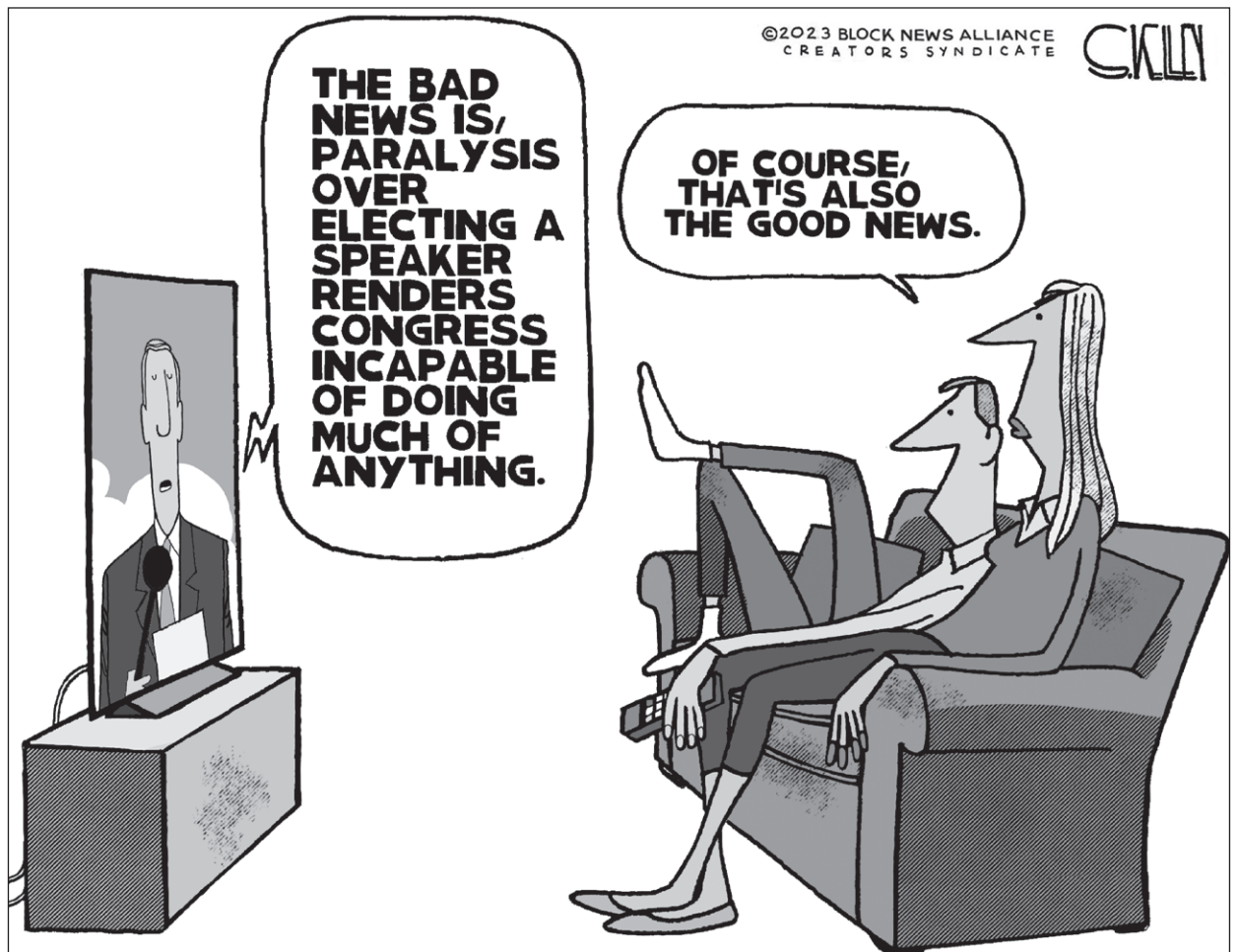
CONGRATULATE JOHN SCHMIDT

We plan to celebrate our 2022 Telegraph Herald First Citizen Award recipient, John Schmidt, with a public reception from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 31, in the Diamond Jo Casino Harbor Room.

A program will begin at 6 p.m. The event is free, and no RSVPs are required. The event will be shown live on Telegraph-Herald.com.

Additionally, we invite community members as well as family and friends of Schmidt to send personal well wishes to him for publication in a special keepsake section of the TH on Jan. 31. To submit your free personal congratulatory message of 250 words or less, go to FirstCitizenAward.com. You can even include photos. The deadline to submit is Jan. 16. For businesses that would like to congratulate Schmidt, please contact the advertising department at 563-588-5694.

Gilligan is a 30-plus years veteran of the Telegraph Herald and has been executive editor since 2017. Email her at amy.gilligan@thmedia.com



other view

Form of slavery taking place in Iowa

BY PAUL PATE

Iowa Secretary of State



There is a form of slavery taking place in Iowa right now. It's called human trafficking, and it occurs when men, women, or children are forced to perform labor

services or sexual acts. This horrific crime affects thousands of people across the U.S., and it can happen to anyone. The State of Iowa is taking steps to raise awareness about human trafficking and put an end to this danger, but we need your help.

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. This is an opportune time for Iowans to learn how to recognize the signs of human trafficking, stand with survivors, and inform them of available resources.

Human trafficking is a crime that can occur behind closed doors, in plain sight, at a workplace, and in any area of our country. One year ago, I announced the launch of a new initiative to bring Iowa's business community together to fight back. It's called Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT), and our goal is to

build a statewide army in Iowa. Since its launch, more than 600 businesses and organizations have taken up the cause.

The genesis of IBAT came in April of 2021, while I was attending a lunch-and-learn in my hometown of Cedar Rapids. Participants at the event detailed some of the horrors victims endure. There was also discussion about a human trafficking attempt that was thwarted by an alert employee at the Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids. The employee had undergone a human trafficking awareness training and recognized the signs. I quickly realized there was an opportunity to bring this kind of awareness statewide to address this form of modern-day slavery.

If Iowa's business community comes together, we can accomplish the goal of ending human trafficking in our state. Whether it's a large corporation or a mom-and-pop store on main street with one employee, every business can join, and every business can make a difference. Something as simple as handing out a brochure or making a social media post can make a difference. It can create a ripple effect across the state.

My office, the Iowa Legislature, the Iowa Department of Public Safety's

Office to Combat Human Trafficking, and the Iowa Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Enforcement are all working toward the same goal — to make Iowa a trafficking-free state. But we need your help.

There are several ways Iowans can make a difference. If you're a business owner or manager, join IBAT. If you want to learn more on how to recognize the signs of trafficking, you can view free online training at STOPHTIowa.org. If you want to show your support for survivors and raise awareness, Wednesday, Jan. 11, is Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Help us raise awareness and join thousands of people across this U.S. by wearing blue that day and posting a picture on social media, using #HumanTraffickingAwarenessDay and #IowaSAH.

We can all make a difference. Every added voice helps. Learn something, do something. Together, let's put an end to human trafficking.

Paul Pate is serving his third term as Iowa's secretary of state and commissioner of elections. He previously served as mayor of Cedar Rapids and as an Iowa state senator.

letters to the editor THLETTERS@THMEDIA.COM

Taxpayers don't want to spend on Five Flags

RICK TRAUSCH
Bradley St., Dubuque

The Five Flags Commission and City Council are not listening to the people of Dubuque. No means no today, tomorrow and next week.

This issue has been dug up time and again for the last five years. The answer has always been no. It's time to stop beating a dead horse and accept the will of the Dubuque taxpayer.

Any attempt to spend taxpayer money on Five Flags would be voted down by the people. If it requires a referendum or a petition, so be it. We are ready.

Journalists should have checked out congressman's background

SISTER MARY HEALEY
Carmel Drive, Dubuque

That creep who was elected to Congress in New York with massive lies on his resume shows how underfunded newspapers are now.

A generation ago, reporters would have checked all that. Now newspapers can't afford enough reporters to track every detail.

Oh, for the days of "The Front Page"!

Editor's note: A previous version of this letter contained an editing error.

letter guidelines

- Submit your letter by email to thletters@thmedia.com or through our submission form at <http://tinyurl.com/8gaennr>.
- Letters are published at the discretion of the Telegraph Herald.

- All letters must be accompanied by the author's street address and telephone number(s). The street name is published; street numbers and phone numbers are not.
- When authors write in an official capacity — representing governmental bodies, organiza-

- tions or businesses, for example — the institution is listed in the address line.
- Maximum word count: 250.
- All letters, including those within the word-count limit, are subject to abridgment and editing.

- Letters may bear up to two signatures.
- An author will not have two letters published within a 30-day period — 60 days if the subject of the letters is similar — and no more than six letters per calendar year, regardless of topics.



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."