

Doctor: Vaccines are infinitely safer than the diseases

They say what comes around, goes around. Since at least the 1400s, inoculation to protect healthy people from dangerous diseases has been part of the human experiment. At that time, different societies were using intentional exposure to smallpox to protect mass outbreaks of the disease.

In the late 1700s, scientists learned that infection of less-morbid cowpox could confer immunity to smallpox. Open sores of milkmaids were swabbed and the virulent material used to inoculate others to great success.

The name “vaccine” eventually was coined, deriving from the Latin “vacca,” or cow.

In the 1800s-1900s, many more vaccines were developed and successfully reduced disease morbidity and mortality.

According to the World Health Organization, in 1918-1919, the Spanish flu killed an estimated 20 million people worldwide – greater than 1% of the earth’s population at the time. It still took until 1945 for the first influenza vaccine to be approved for military use, and just in time for a second World War.

THE ADVANCES OF THE AGE of enlightenment, an undeniable eruption of intellectual and scientific progress, was still quite leisurely by today’s standards.

Now, scientific techniques are hastened by powerful computing systems, state-of-the-art diagnostic techniques including better understandings of DNA, the workings of cell replication and proliferation and ever-advancing cures for diseases.

Rapid advancements have been accompanied by increased skepticism for immunization and, indeed, for scientific establishments in general. Hesitancy around vaccine safety threatens to unravel centuries of public health progress.

Take, for example, a 2024 study in *The Lancet*, which estimated that in the last 50 years, 154 million lives have been saved around the globe as



GUEST VIEW
Dr. Emily Boevers
Waverly Health Center
Waverly/Nashua

a result of vaccines. Of these, it estimates 95% were children under five years of age.

That is quite an impressive statistic on its own.

There is, however, a vaccine benefit beyond simple survival. Vaccines are scientifically proven to reduce the episodes of illness experienced and severity of illness requiring hospitalization.

Therefore, the economic benefit of vaccines to our society and cost of health care is roughly \$2.7 trillion dollars. Trillion, with a “T.”

FOR THOSE READERS WHO ARE MORE concerned with the microeconomics of immunization, you’ll be glad to know that vaccines make “cents” for individuals and families, too. A 2014 study found that vaccination reduced need for special education due to vaccine-preventable intellectual delay, lost wages due to disability and lost parent wages.

No medical treatment is without risk, but vaccines have been shown over time to be infinitely safer than disease.

Individual exceptions are important to protect the weakest and most at-risk among us from a poor outcome. However, the majority of us can, and do, benefit from immunization both personally and as a civilized society.

Perhaps you’ve heard the story of Anthropologist Margaret Mead explaining that the first sign of an ancient civilization was evidence of a fractured femur – the thigh bone – having healed.

Someone, centuries ago, cared enough about another to wrap up his leg and keep him safe. Making choices to protect ourselves and each other is what makes us human.

— *Dr. Emily Boevers, MD, is an Ob-Gyn, farm girl and mother of three living in Waverly.*

PICNIC SEASON— A Real Crowd Pleaser!



Roll for initiative

It’s been a long time since I’ve played a tabletop RPG.

I’ve never been a huge player of this particular style of game, but at various points over the years I’ve been involved in different campaigns of games like *Dungeons and Dragons* or *Shadowrun*.

It’s a good time, gathering around with friends, or at least mutual acquaintances of friends, and spending an evening alternating between doing group improv storytelling and a lot of math which, now that I think about it, really does make it the nerdiest possible pastime.

Sadly, it’s harder and harder to get in on a campaign these days. The people I use to play with are scattered to the winds and setting up multi-hour drives on a consistent basis for an in-person gathering just isn’t feasible.

The public library does occasionally do a Saturday D&D campaign. Unfortunately, my particular schedule makes attending even a one-shot session difficult as I generally have work to do on Saturdays.

Work like writing this column about how hard it is to find time to play tabletop RPGs.

Fortunately, we have the internet and “*Baldur’s Gate 3*.”

In addition to being an overall incredible video game, the *Dungeons and Dragon’s*-based game has online co-op capability, allowing fellow real world adventurers to join your game.

I have two friends who also have “*Baldur’s Gate 3*” and have, independently, proposed a co-op campaign. No need to drive to a different county. No need to worry about hosting a get-together.

It should just be a simple matter of logging on in the comfort of our respective homes and playing the game.

I’ve never run a game on my own, but how hard could it be to coordinate three people to play a game online?

As it turns out, hard.

I WAS NAÏVE ABOUT HOW MUCH removing the need for an in-person gathering would impact the overall challenge of trying to schedule such an ordeal.

While the internet does make possible something that would otherwise be completely unfeasible even without having to consider travel, trying to get just three people on the same page has been more of a challenge than I expected.

I had to make a Google Form questionnaire for it, asking everything from



Travis Fischer
Reporter/Photographer
Columnist
Charles City Press

what their preferred availability is to how much they want to role-play in the game.

Of course, half of their responses were diametrically opposed to each other. One wants light role-playing and a fourth party member. The other wants heavier role-playing while sticking with three people.

Instead of them just inherently being on the same page with each other, now I have to figure out how to split the difference between them while also coming up with a schedule that threads the needle of the small overlap in their availability.

Oh, and I have to make it work for me, too, in the process.

How do people do this? How did people ever do this?

I have a newfound respect for anybody that’s ever managed to put together a group of five or six people and get them to regularly attend a game. It’s not as easy as it sounds.

— *Travis Fischer is a news writer for the Charles City Press and is glad that he at least doesn’t have to buy snacks for the group.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ...

Support wind energy to give farmers options

The undersigned owner-operators of farmland in Floyd County support the Wind Farm project.

Future wind opportunities, such as the most recent Invenergy project, are great for Floyd County from two standpoints:

- 1) Long-term financial security for producers who choose to host a turbine on their property, and,
- 2) A wider property base to provide the opportunity for county government leaders to lower the tax levy.

Margins in agriculture are getting thinner like most segments of our economy. Agricultural producers have individual rights and responsibilities when deciding to add another enterprise to sustain their farming operation. They need to be given the opportunity to make those decisions without local government involvement.

Margins in county government are getting thinner as decisions out of control of the local authorities are being transferred to the county, city and school decision makers. A change in the local government’s position regarding wind energy will be an opportunity for reduces tax askings to assist with those lost state revenues.

Now is the time for Floyd Couty supervisors to welcome wind energy back to the county to enhance agricultural net income (and subsequent future increased spending for their personal and farm business) while providing a means to increase the property tax base (to lower taxes to *all* county property tax payers).

Leland Boyd, Charles City
Kent C. and Lori A. Hoeft, Charles City
Daniel R. Miller, Rockford
Kurtis Hoeft, Charles City
Craig and Julie Begeman, Charles City
Bill Vetter, Charles City
Denny Begeman, Charles City
Jerry and Georgena Vetter, Charles City

Iowa private property rights rest in Reynolds’ hands

The future of every Iowan’s right to own private property rests in the hands of Gov. Kim Reynolds.

At question is whether the governor will sign HF639 into law to curtail the use of eminent domain for CO2 pipelines by private companies for profit without public necessity. Hundreds of impacted Iowa landowners anxiously await her decision.

Summit Carbon Solutions has conditional approval to exercise eminent domain to take our land for its Midwest Carbon Express under the authority of the Iowa Utilities Commission (IUC).

Landowners have pushed back against Summit’s plan since 2021 when we first received certified letters and realized this isn’t “just another pipeline.”

It will not transport oil, natural gas, water or any other substance needed for public comfort and convenience. Summit’s CO2 pipeline is a private project aimed at reaping hundreds of billions of dollars in taxpayer-funded 45Q carbon credits for the metric tons of CO2 captured and sequestered in the caverns of western North Dakota.

THE BILL ON GOV. REYNOLD’S DESK will not stop the construction of Summit’s pipeline. It will, however, curb the use of eminent domain by requiring the company to build its pipeline solely with voluntary easements.

Those who do not want a hazardous CO2 pipeline on their property will not be forced to do so.

HF639 will also protect landowners from catastrophic monetary loss by requiring pipeline companies to carry liability insurance or pay increased premiums on landowners’ policies in the event of a pipeline break.

The bill also addresses land restoration, IUC reform and limits on CO2 pipeline permit renewal.

A recent poll in *The Iowa Standard* shows 93% of Iowans think the governor should sign HF639. If Summit Carbon Solutions, a venture capitalist company, succeeds with this uncon-

stitutional land grab, any Iowa property owner could be the target of the next money-making scheme coming to the state.

THIS ISN’T COMPLICATED. Any high school student taking the new Iowa Civics Exam knows the Constitution grants power to use eminent domain to the government alone with just compensation and only for the public good. Three states on Summit’s route understand this. Minnesota, Nebraska, and South Dakota do not allow eminent domain for CO2 pipelines.

Gov. Kim Reynolds has shown the courage needed to speak truth to power many times in the past. By signing HF639, she can ensure her legacy and protect the constitutional property rights of every Iowan by curbing the use of eminent domain for profit without public need.

Respectfully,
Kathy Carter, Floyd County
Candi Brandau Larson, Floyd County
Glen Alden, Hancock County
Brenda A. Barr, Hancock County
Patty Beyer, Cherokee County
Michael Daly, Johnson County
Bonnie Ewoldt, Crawford County
Paul & Julie Glade, Wright County
Anne Gray, Sioux County
Barbara Henning, Buena Vista County
Janette Henning, Greene County
Mike Henning, Greene County
Willard Hostetler, Greene County
Wilmer Hulstein, Sioux County
Don Johannsen, Cherokee County
Wayne and Dee Johnson, Clay County
Denny & Kerry King, Clay County
Cindy Kruthoff, Crawford County
Alan Laubenthal, Kossuth County
Sioux Lawton, Hancock County
Marty & Wanda Maher, Page County
Tom & Susie McDonald, Montgomery County
James & Jan Norris, Montgomery County
Kimberly Oldenburger, Blackhawk County
Mary Powell, Shelby County

Keep Iowa moving forward with energy tax credits

By Dave Johnson
Riceville

As a lifelong Iowa farmer and landowner who currently participates in a wind energy project, I’ve seen firsthand how energy tax credits support rural families and strengthen Iowa’s energy future. These credits are crucial for maintaining reliable power and serve as a financial hedge for farmers facing unpredictable markets.

Here in Iowa, we are known for having the freedom to flourish. It’s time we unlock our true potential and allow renewable energy to flourish. However, the recent proposal from the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee to cut energy tax credits threatens this stability.

The proposed cuts would undermine the tools that allow farmers and rural communities to invest in clean, reliable energy. This isn’t just about economic growth – it’s about securing the future of our energy grid and ensuring farmers can adapt to changing markets.

Investing in wind and other clean energy sources keeps energy production local, lowering costs for Iowans and contributing to a more reliable power grid nationwide. A strong energy sector also helps Iowa stay competitive globally, attracting industries and jobs to the state.

I’m proud to be a farmer on the forefront of creating energy independence for America. I hope farmers continue to have the same opportunities I did.

If we want to prioritize American energy independence and support hardworking farmers, we need to ensure these tax credits remain in place. Cutting them would make it harder for farmers to invest in clean energy projects, which help diversify incomes and provide additional local revenue.

I urge Iowa’s congressional delegation to oppose these harmful cuts. We need policies that strengthen our energy industry and economy – policies that ensure a prosperous future for Iowa’s farmers and the state as a whole.

Let’s keep Iowa moving forward.

LETTERS POLICY

The Charles City Press is committed to offering a forum for a wide variety of views. To submit a letter to the editor or guest column, email it to editor@charlescitiypress.com or mail it to Charles City Press, 801 Riverside Drive, Charles City IA 50616.

Electronic submissions are preferred.

- Writers must include name, address and phone number to be used to verify the author. Name and hometown will be published.
- Letters to the editor are preferred at 300 words or fewer;

guest views are preferred at 700 words or fewer.

- We may limit letters to once every 30 days per author.
- **Items on this page are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Press, its owner or staff.**