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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

We welcome letters from our readers on any subject of interest. We reserve the right to edit for length, grammar or libel. All submitted letters must be signed and include a telephone number for verification. Campaign accusations without chance of rebuttal will not be published the week before an election. Federal and state candidate endorsements will not be published.

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# Perspectives

## Move forward

Now that an audit of Clark County's 2020 presidential election results have been completed — and no major signs of fraud or irregularity were found — local Republicans need to move on. This doesn't just mean accepting that Democrat Joe Biden won last year's election; it means moving on to next year's midterm elections, when every member of the House of Representatives and a U.S. Senate seat will be up for grabs.

By accepting that Donald Trump lost the state of Wisconsin, despite clearly dominating in this area, Republicans can move ahead with a strategy to win back seats in Congress. If they continue to clutch at straws and hope they can prove non-existent mass voter fraud, they will make themselves out to be sore losers. Instead, they should be looking ahead to see what can appeal to voters in 2022 and beyond.

Of course, it may be tempting to latch on to a couple of errors that were caught during the Clark County audit. The main problem, which affected both candidates, was people double-voting for their preferred candidate. Instead of fixing the ballot by erasing their write-in, some people inadvertently allowed their ballot to be rejected by the vote-counting machine.

This is an unfortunate turn of events for these voters, but it does not amount to the grand technological conspiracy that some may have been hoping to find with this audit. Still, it's good to hear that county clerk Chris Jensen will be talking to local clerks about this particular problem so voters in the future won't have their ballots discarded due to an honest mistake. If the audit did nothing else, it did root out an easily fixable mistake.

However, it did not show a significant undercounting of Trump votes, as some Republican Party members may have expected. Instead, it reconfirmed that the former president had a strong following among local voters, and still does. The problem is, his statewide appeal fell short of repeating his surprise 2016 victory here in America's Dairyland.

If the county party wants to show the rest of the party the way forward, perhaps it should be helping develop a platform and a slate of candidates to promote that set of principles. These will surely include legacies from the Trump presidency, such as a strong stance on immigration enforcement and an "America first" trade policy.

However, if the party wants to broaden its appeal, it needs to work on some issues that perhaps the Trump campaign ignored. The former president repeatedly promised, but never delivered on his promise for a replacement to Obamacare. Those who rely on the Affordable Care Act for insurance still have a lot of legitimate complaints about the cost of health insurance on the marketplace. Introducing proposals that would help bring down those costs would go a long way toward rebuilding the party's nationwide electability.

The Clark County Republican Party would do well to look at its own voters to find an idea worth backing. In November of 2014, just two years before helping send Trump to the White House, a majority of county voters got behind an idea that generally doesn't fair well among the party's upper echelons. Nearly 60 percent of the county's voters said "yes" to an advisory referendum calling on the state "to accept federal funding for the expansion of the Medicaid/Badgercare program in Wisconsin to cover persons up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level."

It may be hard to believe this was true, given the antipathy Republican leaders generally have toward accepting federal money for Medicaid expansion. But, if Trump taught us anything, defying one's own party isn't always a bad thing, especially if it means aligning oneself closer to the voters themselves. Local Republicans could do a lot toward expanding their influence by taking a defiant, yet commonsense, stance on an issue that everyone cares about.

The Tribune-Phonograph editorial board consists of publisher Kris O'Leary and editor Kevin O'Brien

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## PAGING THROUGH HISTORY: A Treasury of Weekly Newspapers

ABBOTSFORD TRIBUNE  
PUBLISHED IN ABBOTSFORD  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 1951

THE TRIBUNE-PHONOGRAPH  
PUBLISHED IN ABBOTSFORD  
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 2, 1981

**Recreation are now  
has horse shoe court**

The Abbotsford Recreation Area now has a horse shoe pitching court, recently completed by a group of volunteers, under the direction of Dr. E.J. Schmidt. They also placed the posts for the tennis nets and for a sign on the highway. A fire-place has been started.

The plans for work to be completed this fall call for the black topping of the tennis courts.

A number of people have been making use of the recreational facilities of the project and find has much to offer. More people are invited to share in the fun and enjoyment. This is a fine place to go for picnic meals, where swings, teeter totters and other equipment furnish entertainment for the youngsters.

**Library reopens Tuesday**

The public library, which has been closed for two weeks, will reopen on Tuesday, Sept. 4.

A number of new books have arrived and are ready for your reading enjoyment.

The public is invited to make use of the library facilities, have a library card, and be a regular patron. Books from the regular reading shelf may be kept two weeks, and renewed another two weeks. Current magazines, of which there is a varied selection, may be taken out for a week. There is also a rental shelf of late fiction. Any responsible person may have a library card.

During the last two weeks, the library underwent a thorough cleaning and the floors were refinished.

**Abby, Colby teachers  
still without contracts**

Teachers in both the Colby and Abbotsford school districts began the 1981-82 school year without contracts. That situation may soon change in Colby, but any solution to the impasse in Abbotsford appears to be a long way off.

Representatives for the Colby teachers and the school board did not reach agreement on a 1980-81 contract until his past April. Following the settlement, bargaining began on the 1981-'82 contract. The teachers association recently approved a

contract for this year, and members of the school board will vote on the proposed agreement at this month's board meeting.

In the proposal approved by the teachers, the base salary for a starting teacher with a bachelor's degree would go up from \$11,715 to \$12,000. For each year of experience, an automatic raise of four percent is added. For starting teachers with a masters degree, the base wage would go up from \$11,950 to \$12,755. The four percent step raises apply there also.

There are not many other major changes in the contract approved the teachers. Department heads would receive an extra \$300 as opposed to last year's \$200. The district would pay \$128 of the monthly health insurance premium of about \$150, instead of last year's \$109.

Based on a salary of \$16,000, which Superintendent Ed Haas said is about average, the fringe payments add up to \$3,016. Haas added \$128 per month for health insurance and the current \$20 per month for dental insurance.



**CARCASS CONTEST BY CLARK COUNTY FAIR  
PINTER'S PACKING PLANT, DORCHESTER  
1981**