

“Why shouldn’t you miss out? “

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“Vaccine Slackers”

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Give yourselves a round of applause. Pat yourselves on the back. You’re making America great again. As of this writing, Montour County has 8,578 persons fully vaccinated against the COVID-19. Pennsylvania ranks as the 10th most vaccinated state with 50% of the population vaccinated. Thank you, you get a gold star, a sticker and a band aid passport toward normalcy. We’re getting there, thanks to folks patriotic enough to get vaccinated.

Despite my own Pfizer freedom courtesy of dedicated people at the Hughes Office Building, I’m still nervous about visiting closed crowded spaces. My reluctance stems from those who delay becoming vaccinated, especially those who’ve forfeited common sense to conspiracies and who irrationally reject that the solution is vaccination. Unfortunately, the national rate of vaccinations is slowing down, stalling at around 35% when we require 70% for us all to enjoy picnics, parties, ball games, indoor dining, church socials and potluck suppers.

Have you ever attended a church potluck supper? I miss them. It’s one of the pleasures I’m hoping to enjoy once my vaccination ticket transports me and everyone else to where we need to be. Church and casseroles, Christianity’s everyday version of the Lord’s Supper.

A parochial school teacher gave her class a "show and tell" assignment. Students were instructed to bring in an object that represented their religion to share with the class. The first student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Benjamin and I am Jewish and this is a Star of David." The second student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Mary. I'm a Roman Catholic and this is a Rosary." The third student got in up front of the class and said, "My name is Tommy. I am Methodist, and this is a casserole."

Help me here. What would you call someone who showed up for a church potluck, plunked down a small bag of cut carrots, and then pushed themselves to the front of the line? Every church has a few folk who contribute little but somehow get in front of the line carrying a hubcap and shovel eager to pile up as much as they can before everyone else gets a chance. Clever pastors learn to strategize who gets in line first: Little kids and parents, those over 70 years old, by birthdays. Pastors also learn that when you decide who waits, you go last.

Vaccination hesitancy we can appreciate. Ask your questions. Get solid answers. Listen to experts. Learn from those you respect who are stepping up to the plate for the sake of the nation. We do have a superb hospital in the neighborhood. But if you’re getting your medical advice from propagandist purveyors perpetrating lies and nonsense, you’re only making it worse for yourself and those you say you love. Why join this unpatriotic confederacy of deliberate ignorance? Remember, friends, the liar-in-chief got his vaccination in January. Vaccine deniers also callously waste doses others could use. Someone once taught that when you’re walking through hell, don’t stop there.

When a flood threatens a town, what would you think about those folk who whine that their basement might flood but refuse to help shovel sand into sandbags alongside fire company volunteers and high

school teams? When I played adult soccer, what annoyed us were those guys who'd forget to pay their dues, who were too busy to show up to rake and line the field, yet always showed up ready to be first to play.

Are these folk any different from anti-vaccination folk who repeat the lies yet expect to reap benefits from the efforts of others? Does the squirrel really think he's earned the oak tree? Consider Aesop's fable of the Ant and Grasshopper. Some stories relate how the grasshopper learns his lesson and next year is prepared to work. Conservative me prefers it when Ant bolts the door on Grasshopper. No effort? Why shouldn't you miss out? How about the little Red Hen? The other animals refuse to help her plant the seeds, harvest the wheat, grind the wheat, bake the bread, yet they want to eat the bread. She eats the bread herself.

Would you anti-vaccination folks -- you vaccination idle welfare queens still insisting on health care if you get sick -- stop being barnyard social socialist freeloaders? Grow up, pony up, roll up your sleeve for yourselves, for your loved ones, for your neighbors, and for something more important than yourselves: Your country.