

THE DAYTONA BEACH  
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Krys Fluker, Opinion Page Editor | krys.fluker@news-jrnl.com**"Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue  
freely according to conscience, above all liberties."**  
— Milton

## OUR VIEW

Embracing  
culture  
of giving

Many people in Volusia and Flagler counties are facing the most prolonged period of privation they've ever experienced. The basic necessities — food, shelter, utilities — are beyond many who are still awaiting unemployment payments or even their federal stimulus payment. The economic storm is devastating to them all, but particularly to those who have always worked hard to stay off assistance programs and take care of themselves as much as possible.

But they are not alone.

Across the region, people and organizations are working to ensure that families and individuals don't go hungry. The assistance ranges from everyday necessities like groceries, to help with rent or mortgage payments. And unlike the big federal and state government programs, these efforts (though sometimes funded by governmental agencies) are generated by community members who care enough to give time, money or supplies to help the less fortunate.

There are so many, in fact, that it would be difficult to recognize them all. But a few efforts are worth calling out for their work over the past week. Among them:

- A massive effort that delivered 600 bags of food to people in public housing in Daytona Beach. The groups behind this, organized by the Daytona Beach Housing Authority, read like a who's who of assistance in Volusia County, including Second Harvest, Halifax Urban Ministries (which played a key role and even devoted some of its own supplies), Volusia County (which contributed money and allowed the Ocean Center to be used as an assembly point for the bags) and of course, the Housing Authority, where a relatively new executive director, Terril Bates, is gaining a deserved reputation as an innovator and go-getter. Food Brings Hope is also continuing its distributions of bags of food at local high schools — a welcome effort that fills hearts as well as bellies.

- Speaking of Volusia County — it's set aside \$5 million of the nearly \$100 million it received as part of the federal CARES Act to help local residents who struggle to pay their mortgage or rent. The funding will be more broadly available than a previous grant program, meant to help the working poor. To qualify for the new program, a family of four can have an income as high as \$77,800 for a family of four. There are a few other requirements, but the money should help people that County Councilwoman Heather Post calls "the forgotten middle class," who don't qualify for much in the way of other assistance. With national mortgage delinquencies hitting an all-time high in April, this money could help some families keep their homes.

- The city of Palm Coast has launched a program that allows city utility customers to donate to help others that might be struggling to pay their bills. Called People Lending Assistance to Neighbors, or PLAN, the program allows residents to designate donation amounts on their utility bills and include the sum in their payment. We'll be interested to see how many people take advantage of the opportunity to help their neighbors.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## School funding should be priority

Am I the only grandfather in Volusia County to be outraged that our public schools are struggling for funding to educate our most precious resource, while the Legislature is going forward with plans to build big roads which will benefit a few and accelerate the ongoing injury to our environment? Have we learned nothing

from this pandemic? Government exists solely for the benefit of the people — all of them. Our public schools, and the dedicated teachers who staff them, are the key to our future. We the people must demand that the men and women we send to Tallahassee do their jobs — meaning that they act on our behalf, not on

behalf of their big donors.

Acting on our behalf means giving our teachers a raise, and making sure that all pupils in the system have an equal opportunity to learn.

Legislators: Scrap the roads to nowhere. Do your jobs.

**Harry G. McConnell,  
Ormond Beach**

## Make him right

Donald Trump loves to be right. He feels if everyone is allowed to do a mail-in vote in November, he will lose the election due to "fraud," and other trumped-up reasons. Let's all make him right, and all of us vote with a mail-in ballot for the 2020 election!  
**Joanne Fischette, Port Orange**

## Who's changed?

As a unrepentant Democrat and liberal, I must respond to the writer who claims the Democrats have changed. What rock has he been hiding under? Several of my Republican friends say they don't even

recognize their party anymore and have changed their registration. Since when has it been a legitimate idea to have such a wealth disparity, lack of affordable housing and decent health care, and education being labeled communism? Those were never traditional American values.

Of course we criticize this president, we speak out against this man who is rude, nasty and self absorbed. Some quotes from him embody the height of character assassination. He wants the transformation of China into the most nefarious global menace ever, of Gretchen Whitmer into a communist dominatrix, of

the Obama administration and the FBI into a deep-state cabal and of Joe Biden into a doddering, drooling imbecile who'd be tucked away in some attic if he hadn't already taken refuge in the basement. What do you think of him egging on his supporters to chant "lock her up" when referring to Hillary Clinton?

The Republican Party has changed, it no longer represents gentlemen and patriots who only want what is best for the country. They want what is best to control powerprop up the most corrupt man who has ever held the office and appeal to the least common denominator.

**Susanne Jones,  
New Smyrna Beach**

## TO SUBMIT LETTERS

We welcome letters from readers on matters of public interest. Letters should be no more than 250 words. They must be original and written exclusively for The News-Journal. They can be edited for length and clarity. Anonymous letters and pseudonyms cannot be printed. Letters are printed with the writer's full name and hometown. Those that do not include a home address and daytime phone number will not be considered for publication. Only one letter per writer can be published every 30 days.

**Mail:** Letters to the Editor, The News-Journal, P.O. Box 2831, Daytona Beach, FL 32120-2831

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## Corporate leadership should be put under microscope

**Peter Roff**

The COVID-19 crisis has likely changed American business forever, as politicians use the deadly pandemic to push for changes that will have a major impact on how corporations operate.

How business responds will determine the future of American commerce for years. Important business leaders like Black Rock's Larry Fink are pushing companies to expand their mission beyond maximizing

value for shareholders into things that are on progressives' political wish list.

What Fink and others are advocating for drifts harmfully towards what progressives promote as they seek to control the business sector and move to a centrally planned economy.

If the American economy is to survive, let alone thrive, we need corporate leaders to step up in defense of the free market. They need to eschew the insider deals and crony capitalism that have caused many Americans, especially the young, to lose faith.

There are heroes out there like Tesla's Elon Musk, who recently stood up to Gov. Gavin Newsome and other officials who would not

permit his California manufacturing plant to reopen and get people back to work.

For every hero, there are goats like Alan Armstrong, the CEO of Williams Co., an energy pipeline company. According to recent allegations made in a Delaware court, he secretly worked to undermine a 2016 board-approved merger between his firm and Energy Transfer, a Texas-based pipeline company, that would have paid shareholders a significant premium over the then-market value of their shares.

Nearly four years since it fell through, Williams continues to seek more than a billion dollars in breakup fees, despite Armstrong's recently alleged involvement in the

deal's demise. As a result, half of his board of directors resigned days after the deal was called off, citing a lack of confidence in his ability to lead the company.

Actions like these in the corporate community have regular Americans — more and more of whom join the investor class every day through their 401Ks, Roth IRAs, and by trading stocks online — wondering if they're just feeding corporate cats growing fat off their investments.

Warren Buffet, one of the country's most respected financial leaders, argued in a recent interview that not enough attention is paid to corporate leadership and governance. "Almost all of

the directors I have met over the years have been decent, likable and intelligent," he said. "Nevertheless, many.... are people whom I would never have chosen to handle money or business matters."

If the CEOs and boards of America's companies don't step up to restore public confidence in who they are and what they do, then the politicians will — as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi tried to do in the first coronavirus relief bill. If her proposed amendment requiring diversity on corporate boards had been adopted, it would have been bad for business and everyone else.

The clock is running.

*Roff is a senior fellow at  
Frontiers of Freedom.*